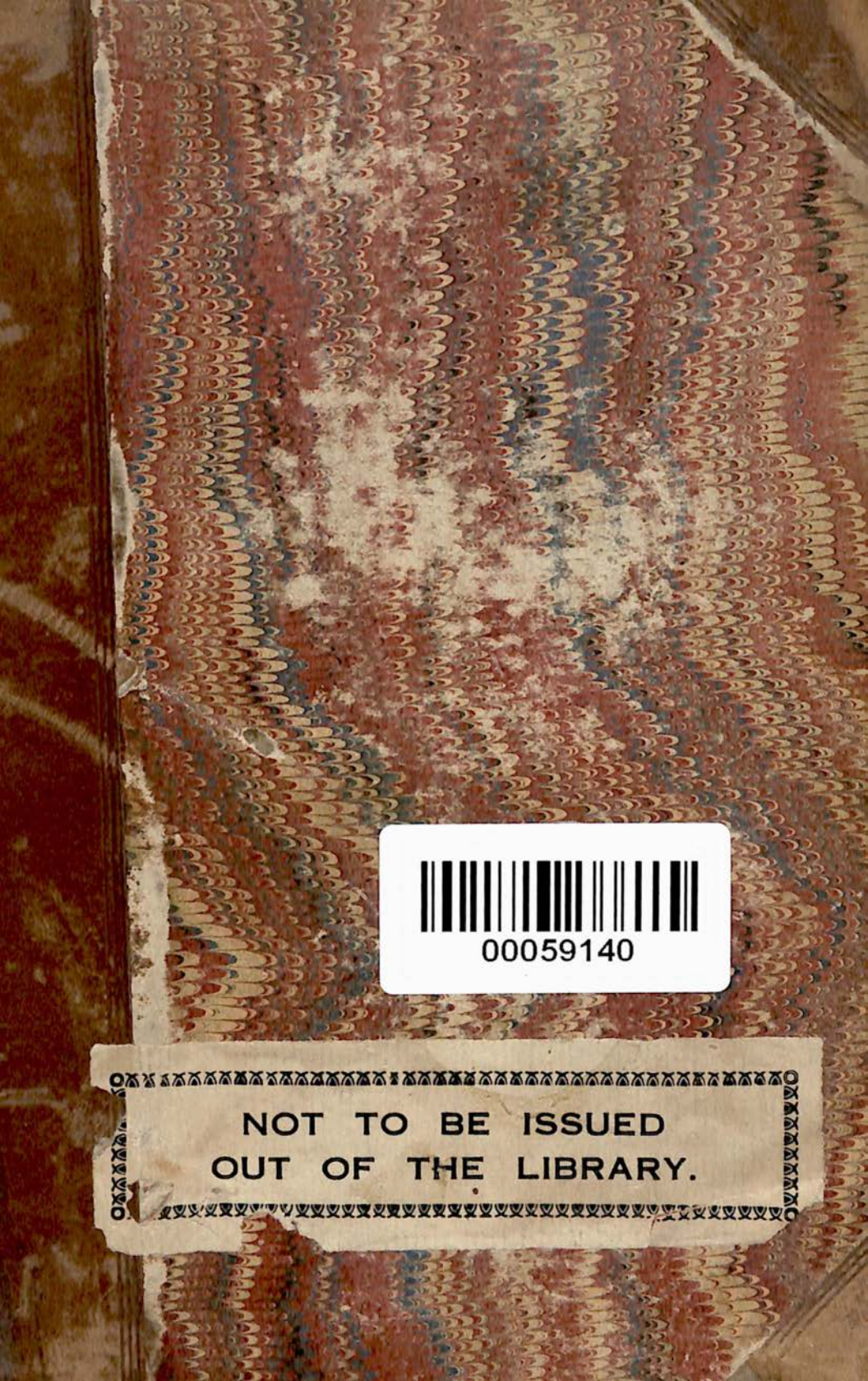
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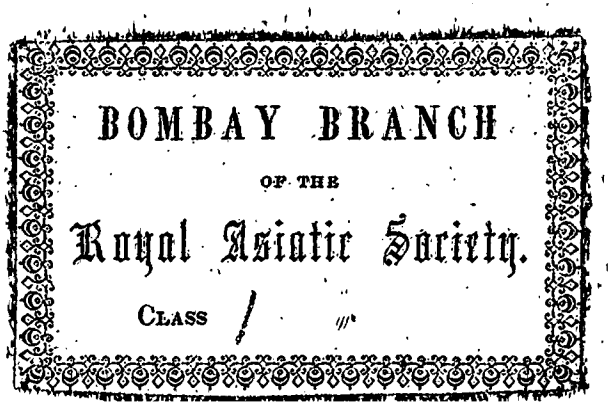

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THE

COLLECTED WRITINGS OF

EDWARD IRVING

IN FIVE VOLUMES

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EDITED BY HIS NEPHEW

THE REV. G. CARLYLE, M.A.

VOL. I.

LONDON
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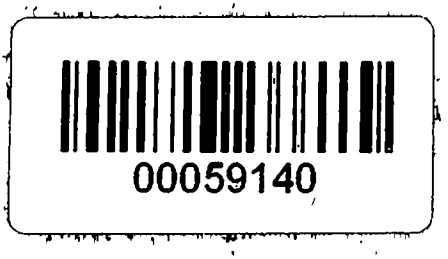
1864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HITHERTO there has been no collected edition of the writings of Edward Irving, and such of his works as were published in his lifetime have long been out of print. To the present generation, therefore, Edward Irving, as a preacher and an author, may be said to be unknown. What he was as a man Mrs Oliphant has told in her genial and spirited biography, lately published.

It is now proposed to make such a collection of his writings as will fairly exhibit his great powers of oratory and thought. It will be the Editor's object to include whatever is of permanent interest, to omit only what may neither throw light upon Mr Irving's convictions, nor possess an independent value. It is his hope that a clear estimate will thus be formed of a man remarkable in the history of religious opinion, but more remarkable for the singular originality and eloquence, the wide range, and often prophetic sublimity, of his Christian teaching.

About half of this Collection will consist of Discourses and Essays now printed for the first time. It is expected that the volumes will appear at intervals of about two months.

G. CARLYLE.

KENSINGTON, LONDON,
January 12, 1864.

LECTURE III.

PAGE

THE SEED WHICH FELL AMONG THORNS, AND WAS CHOKED BEFORE IT COULD BRING FORTH FRUIT, ... 194

LECTURE IV.

THE SEED WHICH FELL ON THE SOIL OF A GOOD AND HONEST HEART, AND BROUGHT FORTH ABUNDANTLY, . . . 259

LECTURE SUPPLEMENTARY.

THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE DOCTRINE TAUGHT IN THIS AND THE PRECEDING LECTURES, CONCERNING A SOIL IN MAN PREPARED FOR THE WORD, ... 319

THE BOOK OF PSALMS.

THE BOOK OF PSALMS, ... 383

MISSIONARIES AFTER THE APOSTOLICAL SCHOOL.

DEDICATION, ... 427

PREFACE, ... 429

THE MISSIONARY CHARTER, ... 437

THE OCCASION AND METHOD OF THE ADDRESSES, . . 439

I.

MESSIAH'S CONSTITUTION FOR THE MISSIONARY ESTATE, . 447

II.

THE PERPETUITY OF THIS MISSIONARY CONSTITUTION PROVED, 467

III.

THE PERPETUITY OF THIS MISSIONARY CONSTITUTION PROVED *—continued*, ... 490

CONCLUSION, ... 512

ORDINATION CHARGE.

PAGE

ORDINATION CHARGE TO THE MINISTER OF THE SCOTS CHURCH, LONDON WALL, ... 527

HISTORICAL VIEW OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND BEFORE THE REFORMATION.

PART I.

THE EARLY PLANTATION, PROGRESS, AND PROSPERITY OF THE CHURCH IN THE REALM OF SCOTLAND, . . . 543

PART II.

THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND WRESTLING AGAINST ANTICHRIST, . 572

NOTES ON THE STANDARDS OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

NOTES ON THE STANDARDS OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND, . 599

ON THE WORD OF GOD.

ON THE WORD OF GOD.

I.

THE PREPARATION FOR CONSULTING THE WORD OF GOD.

THERE was a time when each revelation of the word of God had an introduction into this earth which neither permitted men to doubt whence it came, nor wherefore it was sent. If, at the giving of each several truth, a star was not lighted up in heaven, as at the birth of the Prince of truth, there was done upon the earth a wonder, to make her children listen to the message of their Maker. The Almighty made bare His arm; and, through mighty acts shewn by His holy servants, gave demonstration of His truth, and found for it a sure place among the other matters of human knowledge and belief.

But now the miracles of God have ceased, and nature, secure and unmolested, is no longer called on for testimonies to her Creator's voice. No burning bush draws the footsteps to His presence-chamber; no invisible voice holds the ear awake; no hand cometh forth from the obscure to write His purposes in letters of flame. The vision is shut up, and the testimony is sealed, and the word of the Lord is ended, and this solitary volume, with its chapters and verses, is the sum total of all for which the chariot of heaven made so many visits to the earth, and the Son of God himself tabernacled and dwelt among us.

The truth which it contains once dwelt undivulged in the bosom of God; and, on coming forth to take its place among

things revealed, the heavens and the earth, and nature through all her chambers, gave it reverent welcome. Beyond what it reveals, the mysteries of the future are unknown. To gain it acceptation and currency, the noble company of martyrs testified unto the death. The general assembly of the first-born in heaven made it the day-star of their hopes, and the pavilion of their peace. Its every sentence is charmed with the power of God, and powerful to the everlasting salvation of souls.

Being filled with these thoughts of the primeval divinity of revealed Wisdom when she dwelt in the bosom of God, and was of His eternal self a part, long before He prepared the heavens or set a compass upon the face of the deep; revolving also how by the space of four thousand years every faculty of mute nature did solemn obeisance to this daughter of the Divine Mind, whenever He pleased to commission her forth to the help of mortals; and further meditating upon the delights which she had of old with the sons of men, the height of heavenly temper to which she raised them, and the offspring of magnanimous deeds which these two—the wisdom of God and the soul of man—did engender and bring forth—meditating, I say, upon these mighty topics, our soul is smitten with grief and shame to remark how, in this latter day, she hath fallen from her high estate; and fallen along with her the great and noble character of men. Or if there be still a few names, as of the missionary Martyn, to emulate the saints of old—how to the commonalty of Christians her oracles have fallen into a household commonness, and her visits into a cheap familiarity; while by the multitude she is mistaken for a minister of terror sent to oppress poor mortals with moping melancholy, and do a deadly office upon the happiness of human kind!

For there is no express stirring up of faculties to meditate her high and heavenly strains—nor formal sequestration of the mind from all other concerns on purpose for her special entertainment—nor pause of solemn seeking and solemn waiting for a spiritual frame, before entering and listening to the voice of the Almighty's wisdom. Who feels the sublime dignity there is in a saying fresh descended from the porch of heaven? Who feels the awful weight there is in the least iota

that hath dropped from the lips of God? Who feels the thrilling fear or trembling hope there is in words whereon the eternal destinies of himself do hang? Who feels the tide of gratitude swelling within his breast, for redemption and salvation, instead of flat despair and everlasting retribution? Or who, in perusing the word of God, is captivated through all his faculties, transported through all his emotions, and through all his energies of action wound up? To say the best, it is done as other duties are wont to be done: and having reached the rank of a daily, formal duty, the perusal of the word hath reached its noblest place. That is the guide and spur of all duty, the necessary aliment of Christian life; the first and the last of Christian knowledge and Christian feeling hath, to speak the best, degenerated in these days to stand rank and file among those duties whereof it is parent, preserver, and commander. And to speak not the best, but the fair and common truth, this book, the offspring of the divine mind, and the perfection of heavenly wisdom, is permitted to lie from day to day, perhaps from week to week, unheeded and unperused; never welcome to our happy, healthy, and energetic moods; admitted, if admitted at all, in seasons of sickness, feeble-mindedness, and disabling sorrow. That which was sent to be a spirit of ceaseless joy and hope, within the heart of man, is treated as the enemy of happiness and the murderer of enjoyment: and eyed askance, as the remembrancer of death, and the very messenger of hell!

Oh! if books had but tongues to speak their wrongs, then might this book well exclaim—Hear, O heavens! and give ear, O earth! I came from the love and embrace of God, and mute nature, to whom I brought no boon, did me rightful homage. To man I came, and my words were to the children of men. I disclosed to you the mysteries of hereafter, and the secrets of the throne of God. I set open to you the gates of salvation, and the way of eternal life, heretofore unknown. Nothing in heaven did I withhold from your hope and ambition; and upon your earthly lot I poured the full horn of divine providence and consolation. But ye requited me with no welcome, ye held no festivity on my arrival: ye sequester me from happiness and heroism, closeting me with sickness

and infirmity; ye make not of me, nor use me for your guide to wisdom and prudence, but press me into your list of duties, and withdraw me to a mere corner of your time; and most of ye set me at nought, and utterly disregard me. I came, the fulness of the knowledge of God: angels delighted in my company, and desired to dive into my secrets. But ye, mortals, place masters over me, subjecting me to the discipline and dogmatism of men, and tutoring me in your schools of learning. I came not to be silent in your dwellings, but to speak welfare to you and to your children. I came to rule, and my throne to set up in the hearts of men. Mine ancient residence was the bosom of God; no residence will I have but the soul of an immortal; and if you had entertained me, I should have possessed you of the peace which I had with God, "when I was with him, and was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him. Because I have called and you refused, I have stretched out my hand and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof; I also will laugh at your calamity and mock when your fear cometh: when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind, when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they cry unto me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me."

From this cheap estimation and wanton neglect of God's counsel, and from the terror of this curse consequent thereon, we have resolved, in the strength of God, to do what in us lies to deliver His intelligent and worshipping people—an endeavour which we make with a full perception of the difficulties to be overcome on every side, within no less than without the sacred pale; and upon which we enter with the utmost diffidence of our powers, yet with the full purpose of straining them to the utmost according to the measure with which it hath pleased God to endow our mind. And do Thou, O Lord, from whom cometh the perception of truth, vouchsafe to Thy servant an unction from Thine own Spirit, who searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God—and vouchsafe to Thy people "the hearing ear and the understanding heart, that they may hear and understand, and their souls may live!"

Before the Almighty made His appearance upon Sinai, there were awful precursors sent to prepare His way; while He abode in sight there were solemn ceremonies, and a strict ritual of attendance; when He departed, the whole camp set itself to conform unto His revealed will. Likewise, before the Saviour appeared, with His better law, there was a noble procession of seers and prophets who descried and warned the world of His coming: when He came there were solemn announcements in the heavens and on the earth: He did not depart without due honours; and there followed on His departure a succession of changes and alterations, which are still in progress, and will continue in progress till the world end. This may serve to teach us that a revelation of the Almighty's will makes demand for these three things on the part of those to whom it is revealed:—*A due preparation for receiving it. A diligent attention to it while it is disclosing. A strict observance of it when it is delivered.*

In the whole book of the Lord's revelations you will search in vain for one which is devoid of these necessary parts. Witness the awe-struck Isaiah, while the Lord displayed before him the sublime pomp of His presence, and, not content with overpowering the frail sense of the prophet, despatched a seraph to do the ceremonial of touching his lips with hallowed fire, all before he uttered one word into his astonished ear. Witness the majestic apparition to St John, in the Apocalypse, of all the emblematical glory of the Son of man, allowed to take silent effect upon the apostle's spirit, and prepare it for the revelation of things to come. These heard with all their absorbed faculties, and with all their powers addressed them to the bidding of the Lord. But if this was in aught flinched from, witness in the persecution of the prophet Jonah the fearful issues which ensued. From the presence of the Lord he could not flee. Fain would he have escaped to the uttermost parts of the earth; but in the mighty waters the terrors of the Lord fell on him; and when engulfed in the deep, and entombed in the monster of the deep, still the Lord's word was upon the obdurate prophet, who had no rest, not the rest of the grave, till he had fulfilled it to the very uttermost.

Now judging that every time we open the pages of this holy book, we are to be favoured with no less than a communication from on high, in substance the same with those whereof we have detailed the three distinct and several parts—we conceive it due to the majesty of Him who speaks, that we, in like manner, discipline our spirits with a due preparation, and have them in a proper frame before we listen to the voice; and while it is disclosing to us the important message that we be rapt in full attention; and when it hath disburdened itself into our opened and enlarged spirits, that we proceed forthwith to the business of its fulfilment, whithersoever and to whatsoever it summon us forth. Upon each of which three duties, incumbent upon one who would not forego the benefit of a heavenly message, we shall discourse apart, addressing ourselves in this discourse to the *first* mentioned of the three.

The preparation for the announcement.—When God uttereth His voice, says the Psalmist, coals of fire are kindled; the hills melt down like wax, the earth quakes, and deep proclaims it unto hollow deep. This same voice, which the stubborn elements cannot withstand, the children of Israel having heard but once, prayed that it might not be spoken to them any more. But these sensible images of the Creator have now vanished, and we are left alone, in the deep recesses of the meditative mind, to discern His comings forth. No trump of heaven now speaketh in the world's ear. No angelic conveyancer of heaven's will taketh shape from the vacant air, and, having done His errand, retireth into his airy habitation. No human messenger putteth forth his miraculous hand to heal nature's immedicable wounds, winning for his words a silent and astonished audience. Majesty and might no longer precede the oracles of heaven. They lie silent and unobtrusive, wrapped up in their little compass—one volume amongst many, innocently handed to and fro, having no distinction but that in which our mustered thoughts can invest them. This want of solemn preparation and circumstantial pomp the imagination of the mind hath now to supply. The presence of the Deity, and the authority of His voice, our thoughtful spirits must discern. Conscience must supply the terrors that went before Him; and the brightness of His coming, which

the sense can no longer behold, the heart, ravished with His word, must feel.

For this solemn vocation of all her powers to do her Maker honour, and give Him welcome, it is, at the very least, necessary that the soul stand absolved from every other call. Every foreign influence or authority arising out of the world, or the things of the world, should be burst asunder when about to stand before the fountain of all authority. Every argument, every invention, every opinion of man forgot, when about to approach to the Father and oracle of all intelligence. And if, upon the invitation of an earthly prince, we be held disengaged though preoccupied with a thousand avocations, how much more, upon an audience fixed and about to be holden with the King of kings, doth it become us to break loose from all thraldom of men and things, and be arrayed in liberty of thought and action, to drink in the rivers of His pleasure, and perform the commissions of His lips!

Now, far otherwise it hath appeared to us, do Christians as well as worldly men, come to this most august occupation of listening to the word of God—preoccupied and prepossessed, inclining to it a partial ear, and bringing to it a straitened understanding, and a disaffected will.

Christians are prone to preoccupy themselves with the admiration of those opinions by which they stand distinguished as a church or a sect from other Christians; and instead of being quite unfettered to receive the whole counsel of the divine will, they are prepared to welcome it no further than as it bears upon and stands with opinions which they already favour. To this prejudgment the early use of catechisms mainly contributes, which, however serviceable in their place, have the disadvantage of presenting the truth in a form altogether different from what it occupies in the word itself. In the one it is presented to the intellect chiefly, (and in the catechism of our Church to an intellect of a very subtle order;) in the other it is presented more frequently to the heart, to the affections, to the imitation, to the fancy, and to all the faculties of the soul. In early youth, which is applied to with those compilations, an association takes place between religion and intellect, and a divorcement of religion from the other powers

of the inner man. Which derangement, judging from observation and experience, it is exceeding difficult to set to rights in after life; and so it comes to pass that, in listening to the oracles of God, the intellect is chiefly awake, and the better parts of the message—those which address the heart and its affections, those which dilate and enlarge our imaginations of the Godhead, and those which speak to the various sympathies of our nature—we are, by the injudicious use of these narrow epitomes, indisposed to receive.

And in their train comes controversy, with his rough voice and unmeek aspect, to disqualify the soul for a full and fair audience of her Maker's word. The points of the faith we have been called on to defend, or which are reputable with our party, assume in our esteem an importance disproportionate to their importance in the word, which we come to relish chiefly when it goes to sustain them; and the Bible is hunted for arguments and texts of controversy which are treasured up for future service. The solemn stillness which the soul should hold before her Maker, so favourable to meditation and rapt communion with the throne of God, is destroyed at every turn by suggestion of what is orthodox and evangelical—where all is orthodox and evangelical; the spirit of the reader becomes lean, being fed with abstract truths and formal propositions; his temper ungenial, being ever disturbed with controversial suggestions; his prayers undevout recitals of his opinions; his discourse technical announcements of his faith. Intellect, cold intellect, hath the sway over heavenward devotion and holy fervours. Man, contentious man, hath the attention which the unsearchable God should undivided have; and the fine, full harmony of heaven's melodious voice, which, heard apart, were sufficient to lap the soul in ecstasies unspeakable, is jarred and interfered with; and the heavenly spell is broken by the recurring conceits, sophisms, and passions of men.

Now, truly, an utter degradation it is of the Godhead to have His word in league with that of any man, or any council of men. What matter to me whether it be the Pope, or any work of the human mind, that is exalted to the equality of God? If any helps are to be imposed for the understanding,

or safe-guarding or sustaining of the word, why not the help of statues and pictures for my devotion? Therefore, while the warm fancies of the Southerns have given their idolatry to the ideal forms of noble art, let us Northerns beware we give not our idolatry to the cold and coarse abstractions of human intellect.

Such are the pre-occupations of religious minds: but for those of worldly minds—they are not to be reckoned up, being manifold as their favourite passions and pursuits. One thing only can be said—that before coming to the oracles of God, they are not pre-occupied with the expectation and fear of Him, into whose audience they have come. No chord in their heart is in unison with things unseen; no moments set apart for religious thought and meditation; no anticipations of the honoured interview; nor prayers of preparation, like that of Daniel, before Gabriel was sent to teach him; nor devoutness like that of Cornelius before the celestial visitation; nor fasting like that of Peter before the revelation of the glory of the Gentiles! To minds thus untuned to holiness the words of God find no entrance—striking heavy on the ear, seldom making way to the understanding—almost never to the heart. To spirits hot with conversation, perhaps heady with argument, uncomposed by solemn thought, ruffled and in uproar from the concourse of worldly interests—the sacred page being spread out, its accents are drowned in the noise which hath not yet subsided within the breast. All the awe, and pathos, and awakened consciousness of a divine approach, impressed upon the ancients by the procession of solemnities—is to worldly men without a substitute. They have not solicited themselves to be in readiness. In a usual mood, and a vulgar frame, they come to God's word as to any other composition—reading it without any active imaginations about Him who speaks; feeling no awe of a sovereign Lord, nor care of a tender Father, nor devotion to a merciful Saviour. Nowise depressed out of their wonted independence, nor humiliated before the King of kings—with no prostrations of the soul, nor falling at His feet as dead—with no exclamation, as of Isaiah, "Woe is me, for I am of unclean lips!" nor earnest suit, "Send me," nor fervent ejaculation of welcome,

as of Samuel, "Lord, speak, for Thy servant heareth;" they come to the word, feeling towards it as if it were the word of an equal. No wonder it should fail of happy influence upon spirits which have, as it were on purpose, disqualified themselves for its benefits, by removing from the regions of thought and feeling with which it accords, into other regions, which it is of too severe dignity to affect, otherwise than with stern menace and direful foreboding! If they would have it bless them, and do them good, they must change their manner of approaching it; and endeavour to bring themselves into that prepared and collected and reverential frame which becomes an interview with the High and Holy One who inhabiteth the praises of eternity.

Having thus spoken without equivocation, and we hope without offence, to the contractedness and pre-occupation of mind with which Christians and worldly men are apt to come to the perusal of the word of God, we shall now set forth the two master feelings under which we should address ourselves to the sacred composition.

It is a good custom, inherited from the hallowed days of Scottish piety, and in our cottages still preserved, though in our cities generally given up, to preface the morning and evening worship of the family with a short invocation of blessing from the Lord. This is in unison with the practice and recommendation of pious men, never to open the divine word without a silent invocation of the divine Spirit. But no ejaculation to heaven is of any virtue, save as it is the expression of certain pious sentiments with which the mind is full and overflowing. And, therefore, instead of setting forth any forms of intercession for a divine understanding to accompany the read- of the divine word, it seemeth better that I impress upon your minds those sentiments, which will of their own accord prompt the heart to feel the proper frame, and the tongue to utter the suitable request.

Of those sentiments which befit the mind that cometh into conference with its Maker, the first and most prevailing should be gratitude for His having ever condescended to hold commerce with such wretched and fallen creatures. Gratitude not only expressing itself in proper terms, but possessing the

mind with an abiding and over-mastering mood, under which it shall sit impressed the whole duration of the interview. Such an emotion as cannot utter itself in language—though by language it indicates its presence—but preserves us in a devout and adoring frame, while the Lord is uttering His voice. Go, visit a desolate widow with consolation and help and fatherhood of her orphan children,—do it again and again —and your presence, the sound of your approaching footstep, the soft utterance of your voice, the very mention of your name—will come to dilate her heart with a fulness which defies her tongue to utter, but speaks by the tokens of a swimming eye, and clasped hands, and fervent ejaculations to heaven upon your head! No less copious acknowledgment to God, the author of our well-being and the father of our better hopes, ought we to feel when His word discloseth to us the excesses of His love. Though a veil be now cast over the Majesty which speaks, it is the voice of the Eternal which we hear, coming in soft cadences to win our favour, yet omnipotent as the voice of the thunder, and overpowering as the rushing of many waters. And though the veil of the future intervene between our hand and the promised goods, still are they from His lips who speaks and it is done, who commandeth and all things stand fast. With no less emotion, therefore, should this book be opened than if, like him in the Apocalypse, you saw the voice which spake; or like him in the trance, you were into the third heavens translated, companying and communing with the realities of glory, which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived.

Far and foreign from such an opened and awakened bosom is that cold and formal hand which is generally laid upon the sacred volume; that unfeeling and unimpressive tone with which its accents are pronounced; and that listless and incurious ear into which its blessed sounds are received. How can the sons of men, thus unimpassioned, hold communion with themes in which everything awful, vital, and endearing to the heart of man, do meet together? Why is not curiosity, curiosity ever hungry, on edge to know the doings and intentions of Jehovah, the King of kings? Why is not interest, interest ever awake, on tiptoe to hear the future destiny of

yourselves? Why is not the heart that panteth over the world after love and friendship, overpowered with the full tide of the divine acts and expressions of love? Where is nature gone when she is not moved with the tender mercy of Christ? Methinks the affections of men are fallen into the yellow leaf. Of the poets who charm the world's ear, which is he that indíteth a song unto his God? Some will tune their harps to sensual pleasures, and by the enchantment of their genius well-nigh commend their unholy themes to the imagination of saints. Others, to the high and noble sentiments of the heart, will sing of doméstic joys and happy unions, casting around sorrow the radiancy of virtue, and bodying forth, in undying forms, the short-lived visions of joy! Others have enrolled themselves the high priests of mute nature's charms, enchanting her echoes with their minstrelsy, and peopling her solitudes with the bright creatures of their fancy. But when, since the days of the blind master of English song, hath any poured forth a lay equal to the Christian theme? Nor in philosophy, "the palace of the soul," have men been more mindful of their Maker. The flowers of the garden and the herbs of the field have their unwearied devotees, crossing the ocean, wayfaring in the desert, and making devout pilgrimages to every region of nature, for offerings to their patron muse. The rocks, from their residences among the clouds to their deep rests in the dark bowels of the earth, have a most bold and venturous priesthood; who see in their rough and flinty faces a more delectable image to adore than in the revealed countenance of God. And the political welfare of the world is a very Moloch, who can at any time command his hecatomb of human victims. But the revealed sapience of God, to which the harp of David and the prophetic lyre of Isaiah were strung, the prudence of God, which the wisest of men coveted after, preferring it to every gift which heaven could bestow,—and the eternal intelligence Himself in human form, and the unction of the Holy One which abideth,—these the common heart of man hath forsaken, and refused to be charmed withal.

I testify, that there ascendeth not from earth, a hosanna of her children to bear witness in the ear of upper regions to

the wonderful manifestations of her God! From a few scattered hamlets, in a small portion of her wide territory, a small voice ascendeth like the voice of one crying in the wilderness. But to the service of her Preserver there is no concourse, from Dan unto Beersheba, of her people; the greater part of whom, after two thousand years of apostolic commission, know not the testimonies of our God; and the multitude of those who do, reject and despise them!

But, to return from this lamentation,—which may God hear, who doth not disregard the cries of His afflicted people! With the full sense of obligation to the Giver, combine a humble sense of your own incapacity to value and to use the gift of His holy oracles. Having no taste whatever for the mean estimates which are made, and the coarse invectives that are vented against human nature, which, though true in the main, are often in the manner so unfeeling and triumphant, as to reveal hot zeal, rather than tender and deep sorrow, we will not give in to this popular strain. And yet it is a truth, by experience revealed, that though there be in man most noble faculties, and a nature restless after the knowledge and truth of things—there are, towards God, and His revealed will, an indisposition and a regardlessness, which the most tender and enlightened consciences are the most ready to acknowledge. Of our emancipated youth who bound after the knowledge of the visible works of God, and the gratification of the various instincts of nature, how few betake themselves at all, how few absorb themselves with the study and obedience of the word of God! And when, by God's visitation we address ourselves to the task, how slow is our progress and how imperfect our performance! So true is it that nature is unwilling to the subject of the Scriptures. The soul is previously possessed with adverse interests; the world hath laid an embargo upon her faculties, and monopolized them to herself; old habit hath perhaps added his almost incurable callousness; and the enemy of God and man is skilful to defend what he hath already won. So circumstanced, and every man is so circumstanced, we come to the audience of the word of God, and listen in worse tune than a wanton to a sermon, or a hardened knave to a judicial reprimand. Our understanding is prepos-

sessed with a thousand idols either of the world religious or irreligious—which corrupt the reading of the word into a straining of the text to their service; and when it will not strain, cause it to be skimmed, and perhaps despised or hated. Such a thing as a free and unlimited reception of all the parts of Scripture into the mind, is a thing most rare to be met with, and when met with, will be found the result of many a sore submission of nature's opinions, as well as of nature's likings.

But the word, as hath been said, is not for the intellect alone, but for the heart, and for the will. Now if any one be so wedded to his own candour as to think he doth accept the divine truth unabated—surely no one will flatter himself into the belief that his heart is already attuned and enlarged for all divine affections, or his will in readiness for all divine commandments. The man who thus misdeems of himself, must, if his opinion were just, be like a sheet of fair paper, unblotted, unwritten on; whereas all men are already occupied, to very fulness, with other opinions, and attachments and desires, than the word reveals. We do not grow Christians by the same culture by which we grow men, otherwise what need of divine revelation, and divine assistance? But being unacquainted from the womb with God, and attached to what is seen and felt, through early and close acquaintance, we are ignorant and detached from what is unseen and unfelt. The word is a novelty to our nature, its truths fresh truths, its affections fresh affections, its obedience a new obedience, which have to master and put down the truths, affections, and obedience gathered from the apprehension of nature, and the commerce of worldly life. Therefore, there needeth, in one that would be served from this storehouse of truth opened by heaven, a disrelish of his old acquisitions, and a preference of the new, a simple, childlike teachableness, an allowance of ignorance and error, with whatever else beseems an anxious learner. Coming to the word of God, we are like children brought into the conversations of experienced men; and we should humbly listen and reverently inquire: or we are like raw rustics introduced into high and polished life, and we should unlearn our coarseness, and copy the habits of the station;—nay, we are

like offenders caught, and for amendment committed to the bosom of honourable society, with the power of regaining our lost condition, and inheriting honour and trust—therefore we should walk softly and tenderly, covering our former reproach with modesty and humbleness, hasting to redeem our reputation by distinguished performances, against offence doubly guarded, doubly watchful for opportunities, to demonstrate our recovered goodness.

These two sentiments—devout veneration of God for His unspeakable gift, and deep distrust of our own capacity to estimate and use it aright—will generate in the mind a constant aspiration after the guidance and instruction of a higher power. The first sentiment, of goodness remembered, emboldening us to draw near to Him who first drew near to us, and who with Christ will not refuse us any gift. The second sentiment, of weakness remembered, teaching us our need, and prompting us by every interest of religion and every feeling of helplessness to seek of Him who hath said, "If any one lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth liberally and upbraideth not." The man who under these two master feelings cometh to read, shall not read without profit. Every new revelation, feeding his gratitude and nourishing his sense of former ignorance, will confirm the emotions he is under, and carry them onward to an unlimited dimension. Such a one will prosper in the way; enlargement of the inner man will be his portion, and establishment in the truth his exceeding great reward; affection to the Godhead will lead him on; and the strength which sustaineth the humble will be his reward. "In the strength of the Lord shall his right hand get victory—even in the name of the Lord of hosts. His soul also shall flourish with the fruits of righteousness from the seed of the word, which liveth and abideth for ever."

Thus delivered from prepossessions of all other masters, and arrayed in the raiment of humility and love, the soul should advance to the meeting of her God; and she should call a muster of all her faculties, and have all her poor graces in attendance, and anything she knows of His excellent works and exalted ways she should summon up to her remembrance: her understanding she should quicken, her memory refresh,

her imagination stimulate, her affections cherish, and her conscience arouse. All that is within her should be stirred up, her whole glory should awake, and her whole beauty display itself, for the meeting of her King. As His handmaiden she should meet Him; His own handiwork, though sore defaced, yet seeking restoration; His humble, because offending servant—yet nothing slavish, though humble—nothing superstitious, though devout—nothing tame, though modest in her demeanour; but quick, and ready, all addressed and wound up for her Maker's will.

How different the ordinary proceeding of Christians, who with timorous, mistrustful spirits, with an abeyance of intellect, and a dwarfish reduction of their natural powers, enter to the conference of the word of God! The natural powers of man are to be mistrusted, doubtless, as the willing instruments of the evil one; but they must be honoured also as the necessary instruments of the Spirit of God, whose operation is a dream, if it be not through knowledge, intellect, conscience, and action. Now Christians, heedless of this grand regeneration of the mighty instruments of thought and action, at the same time coveting hard after holy attainments, do often resign the mastery of themselves, are at once taken into the current of the religious world—whirling around the eddy of some popular leader—and so drifted, I will not say from godliness, but drifted certainly from that noble, manly, and independent course, which, under steerage of the word of God, they might have safely pursued for the dignity and salvation of their immortal souls. Meanwhile these popular leaders, finding no necessity for strenuous endeavours and high science in the ways of God, but having a gathering host to follow them, deviate from the ways of deep and penetrating thought —refuse the contest with the literary and accomplished enemies of the faith—bring a contempt upon that cause in which mighty men did formerly gird themselves to the combat —and so cast the stumblingblock of a mistaken paltriness between enlightened men and the cross of Christ! So far from this simple-mindedness, (but its proper name is feeble-mindedness,) Christians should be—as aforetime in this island they were wont to be—the princes of human intellect, the

lights of the world, the salt of the political and social state. And till they come forth from the swaddling bands in which foreign schools have girt them, and walk boldly upon the high places of human understanding, they will never obtain that influence in the upper regions of knowledge and power of which unfortunately they have not the apostolic unction to be in quest. Nor will they ever become the master and commanding spirits of the time, until they cast off the wrinkled and withered skin of an obsolete age, and clothe themselves with intelligence as with a garment, and bring forth the fruits of power and of love, and of a sound mind.

While we thus invocate, to the reading of the word, the highest strains of the human soul, mistake us not as derogating from the office of the Spirit of God. Far be it from any Christian, much further from any Christian pastor, to withdraw from God the honour which is everywhere His due, but there most of all His due, where the human mind laboured alone for thousands of years, and laboured with no success,—viz., the regeneration of itself, and its restoration to the lost semblance of the Divinity. Oh! let Him be reverently inquired after, devoutly waited on, and most thankfully acknowledged in every step of progress from the soul's fresh awakening out of her dark oblivious sleep—even to her ultimate attainment upon earth and full accomplishment for heaven. And that there may be a fuller choir of awakened men to advance His honour and glory here on earth—and hereafter in heaven above—let the saints bestir themselves like angels, and the ministers of religion like archangels strong! And now at length let us have a demonstration made of all that is noble in thought, and generous in action, and devoted in piety, for bestirring this lethargic age, and breaking the bands of hell, and redeeming the whole world to the service of its God and King!

As He doth know this to be the desire and aim of the preceding discourse, so may He prosper it to the salvation of many souls, that to His poor servant, covered over with iniquities, may flow the forgiveness and honour of those who turn many from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to the service of the living God.

II.

THE MANNER OF CONSULTING THE WORD OF GOD.

GOD, being ever willing and ever ready to second and succeed His word, and having a most longing anxiety for the recovery of all men; when His word fails of converting the soul, (as it doth too often,) that failure cannot be due to any omission upon His part, but to some omission or transgression upon ours. If any one, however, incline to refer the failure to a want of willingness, or a withholding of power, upon the part of God, whereof it is not given unto man to discover or remove the cause—then in this his opinion, such a one must needs remain beyond the reach of help. If he think that, though possessed of revelation, we are yet in the dark as to the putting forth of divine power—that to a sinner's salvation there is an element still undisclosed—that the information delivered in the Scriptures is not enough, and the means there prescribed not adequate, and the divine blessing there promised not to be surely calculated on; but that over and beyond all, there is something to be tarried for—then, for one so opinioned, there is nothing but to tarry.

For except by what is revealed, how are the counsels of the Eternal known? and if revelation do not discover the way in which God may assuredly be found, what mortal or immortal can? and if there be a chasm between our present habitations and the holiest of all, who can fill it up? and if one possessed of all God's revelations do still hold himself unaccomplished for the finding of God, who in heaven or earth can help him? and, in short, if employing God's revelation as God himself directs it to be employed, and in the spirit proper to each, taking every measure therein appointed, we may nevertheless be remote from success, and nothing sure of our aim; then

what less shall we say, but that this book—the light and hope of a fallen world—is an idle meteor which mocks pursuit, and may be left to seek its way back into the hiding-place of the Almighty's counsel, from which it hath come forth to man in vain!

But if, upon the other hand, any one believe that God's favour cometh not at random, nor by a way unknown, but may be calculated on in the way that God himself hath revealed it to proceed, and doth distil like the dew falling unseen, and rest upon every one who longeth after it—and that our backward state cometh not of any darkness in the word, nor abstinence of the Spirit of God, but cometh of our own withdrawing from the light, and fighting against the truth—and that it behoveth us to give God thankfulness and praise, taking to ourselves all the blame;—with such a one, we are happy we can freely discourse, and, by God's blessing, we hope to help him onward in the way everlasting.

Yet, for the sake of disabusing the others who stand looking for a dawning they know not whence nor when, let me interrogate any Christian, how he won his way from former darkness to present light? Not by knowledge alone of what the word contains. By what then? By earnest prayer. But what taught him, what encouraged him to pray? Was it not certain revelations in the word? Not by confidence in his knowledge or his strength, but by distrust of both. But what taught him to distrust himself? Was it not certain revelations in the word? Not by bold and urgent endeavours of his own, but by humble endeavours rested upon hope of heavenly aid. But what taught him to bridle his impetuosity and expect superior aid? Was it not certain revelations in the word? And, to sum up all, how doth he know, save by the image of righteousness revealed in the word, that he is not yet in the bondage of his sins, but standeth sure in the liberty of Christ? Why, then, in the name of plain and honest dealing, should he hesitate to acknowledge and asseverate, for the behoof of lingering and mistrustful men, that in God's revelations, rightly used, there is a reservoir of knowledge and direction, ample enough to feed the famished spirit of the world, whence every sinner may derive to himself a satisfying stream to

refresh his present faintness, and to follow his footsteps through the tedious wilderness of life.

The word being, therefore, the great instrument for bringing men to the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ whom He hath sent, and efficacious to that end wherever it is rightly employed; it becometh a great and important question to ascertain what it is which hinders the multitude who peruse its pages from feeling and acknowledging its power, and turning from the error of their ways to serve the living and true God. And without recurring to what hath been already said of the *preparation* necessary for rightly perusing the word of God, we come at once to the perusal itself, and shall now, not without much distrust of our own, and intercession for heavenly power, endeavour to take account of the spirit and manner in which it is wont to be perused amongst us, and of the spirit and manner in which it ought to be perused. And being conscious that we have many convictions to express which chime not in with the temper of these times, and some sayings hard to be received by Christians discipled in modern schools, we ask your patience and Christian courtesy, and pray God for your consent and edification.

The more ignorant sort of men, who entertain religion by a kind of hereditary reverence, as they do any other custom, take up the word of God at stated seasons, and afflict their spirits with the task of perusing it, and, to judge from a vacant face and an unawakened tone, and a facility of enduring interruption, it is often as truly inflicted upon the soul as ever penance was upon the flesh of a miserable monk. Or, upon another occasion, when one beholds mirth and jocularity at once go dumb that an act of worship may take its turn, and revive again with fresh glee when the act is over, one cannot help believing that it hath been task-work with many, if not with all. Against which and all other mortifications it were enough to quote that weighty sentence of Job, "Can a man be profitable to God, as one that is wise is profitable unto himself? or is it any profit to the Almighty that thou makest thy ways perfect?" Doubtless, it is well pleasing to Him that His word is honoured, and that His name is magnified by the intelligent creatures which His hand hath formed; but He

cannot endure out of mere form to be approached, or served out of constraint. His delight is to be preferred above the creatures which He hath made; and to reign supremely in the soul; at all times to be held in reverence, and over all our actions to preside. Want of will to His service, impatience in its performance, joy when it is over, converts it into contempt, the more hateful because it is covered. The weakness and imperfections of our nature He will overlook, and, if besought, will by His Spirit remove; but guile and disguise, and all hypocrisies, His soul hateth, and cannot away with.

Holding of the same superstition is the practice of drawing to the word in sickness, affliction, and approaching dissolution, as if it were a charm against the present evil, or an invocation of the future good. Now, to study the will of God, being of importance chiefly that we may perform it in the face of all opposition from within and from without, it seemeth to me that, of all conditions, sickness and affliction—when we are disabled from action, and in part also from thought—are the least proper for its perusal. For if it cannot overmaster us when we are clothed in all our strength, it is a poor victory to overcome us when disease hath already prostrated our better faculties. At such a time chiefly to take concern about the name and the word of God, is a symptom of the weakness, not of the strength of our devotion. Take heed, then, ye present to the Lord no lame nor maimed offerings, neither put off your allegiance with occasional well-mannered acts of worship; nor think to satisfy, with painful instances of self-denial, that bountiful Being who is gratified with our service only when it goes with all our heart and soul, and yields to us the height of self-enjoyment.

From this extreme of narrow and enforced attendance upon the word of God, there are many who run into the other extreme of constant consultation, and cannot pass an evening together in conversation or enjoyment of any kind, without calling for the Bible and the exposition of its truths by an able hand. That it becomes a family, night and morning, to peruse the word—and that it becomes men to assemble themselves together to hear it expounded—is a truth; while at the same time it is no less a truth, that it is a monkish custom, and

a most ignorant slavery, to undervalue all intellectual, moral, or refreshing converse, for the purpose of hearing some favourite of the priesthood set forth his knowledge or his experience, though it be upon a holy subject. It is not that *he* may talk, but that *we all* may talk as becometh saints; it is not that we may hear the naked truth, but that we may exhibit our sentiments and views of all subjects, our tempers in all encounters, to be consistent with the truth. It is not merely to try our patience in hearing, but to exercise all our graces, that we come together. Let the word be appealed to, in order to justify our opinions and resolve our doubts. Let there be an occasion worthy of it; then let it be called in. But it is to muzzle free discourse, and banish useful topics, and interrupt the mind's refreshment, and bring in upon our manly and freeborn way of life, the slavishness of a devotee, the coldness of a hermitage, and the formality of cloistered canons, thus to check the healthful pulses of unconstrained companionship, and the free disclosures of friendship, and the closer communion and fellowship of saints. Yet though thus we protest against the formality and deadness of such a custom, we are not prepared to condemn it, if it proceed from a pure thirst after divine teaching. If in private we have a still stronger relish for it than in the company of our friends—if in silent study we love its lessons no less than from the lips of our favourite pastor—then let the custom have free course, and let the word be studied whenever we have opportunity, and whenever we can go to it with a common consent.

Against these two methods of communing with the word of God, whereof the one springs from the religious timidity of the world, the other from the religious timidity of Christians—the one a penance, the other a weakness—we have little fear of carrying your judgment; but you will be alarmed when we carry our censure against the common spirit of dealing with it in the ordinary sense of a duty. Not but that it is a duty to peruse the word of God, but that it is something infinitely higher than that word generally imports. Duty means a verdict of conscience in its behalf. Now, when once the Bible is received as the word of God, conscience is not an independent power, for the bidding of which it waits to be opened, and at

its forbidding to continue sealed; but the word, let conscience bid or forbid, stands forth to the whole soul, dressed in its own awful sanctions, "Believe and live"—"Believe not and die." Its argument is its constant necessity. If conscience at a time check us for the neglect, or admonish us of our obligation, it is well; but the absence of this check or admonition will not justify to God our neglect of that which we believe to be His revealed will. When my Maker speaks, I am called to listen by a higher authority than the authority of my own self. I should make sure that it is my Maker who speaks—and for this let every faculty of reason and feeling do its part; but being assured that it is no other than His voice omnipotent, my whole soul must burst forth to give Him attendance. There must be no demur for any verdict of any inward principle. Out of duty, out of love, out of adoration, out of joy, out of fear, out of my whole consenting soul, I must obey my Maker's call. Therefore I argue, and shall shew at length, a higher and more steadfast principle upon which this duty of duties rests. And this is not a metaphysical distinction which I make, or an argument of words. For after I shall have developed my conception, I care not if the name of duty remain, though because of the universal application of that word to every kind and degree of obligation, I should prefer that this first and last, this greatest and strongest of all obligations should be called by the name of a spiritual necessity.

Duty, whose cold and artificial verdict the God of infinite love is served withal, is a sentiment which the lowest relationships of life are not content with. Servant with master—child with teacher—friend with friend—when it comes to the sentiment of duty, the relationship is near its dissolution; and it never thrives or comes to good but when it rests upon well-tried trust and hearty regard; upon a love to our persons, and a confidence in our worth. And in the ties of nature, to parents, to children, to brethren, to husband and wife, to be listened to out of cold constraint of duty, argues nature gone well-nigh dead. There is a prompter consent, a deep sympathy of love, an overstepping of all the limits of duty, a going even unto the death, which hardly satisfies the soul of such affections. What, then, shall we say of that closest of all relations—

creature to Creator—which hath in it the germ of every other; the parental, for He formed us; the patronal, for He hath upheld us; the friendly, for in all our straits He hath befriended us; the loyal, for our safety is in His royal hand; and, which addeth the attachment to very self, "for we are ourselves His workmanship!"

Duty, in truth, is the very lowest conception of it—privilege is a higher—honour a higher—happiness and delight a higher still. But duty may be suspended by more pressing duty—privilege may be foregone and honour forgot, and the sense of happiness grow dull; but this of listening to His voice who plants the sense of duty, bestows privilege, honour, and happiness, and our every other faculty, is before all these, and is equalled by nothing but the stubbornest necessity. We should hear His voice as the sun and stars do in their courses, as the restful element of earth doth in its settled habitation. His voice is our law, which it is sacrilege to disobey, sacrilege worse than rebellion, worse than rebellion against our earthly father. He keeps the bands of our being together. His voice is the charter of our existence, which, being disobeyed, we should run to annihilation, as our great father would have done, had not God in mercy given him a second chance, by erecting the platform of his being upon the new condition of probation, different from that of all known existences. Was it ever heard that the sun stopped in his path, but it was God that commanded? Was it ever heard that the sea forgot her instability, and stood apart in walled steadfastness, but it was God that commanded? Or that fire forgot to consume, but at the voice of God? Even so man should seek his Maker's word as he loveth his well-being, or, like the unfallen creatures of God, as he loveth his very being—and labour in obedience, without knowing or wishing to know aught beyond. To read the word is, therefore, no ordinary duty, but the mother of all duty, enlightening the eyes and converting the soul, and creating that very conscience to which we would subject it. We take our meat not by a duty—the body must go down to dust without it—therefore we persevere, because we love to be. So also the word of God is the bread of life, the spring of all spiritual action, without which the soul will go down—if not

to instant annihilation—to the wretched abyss of spiritual and eternal death. Necessity, therefore, I say, strong and eternal necessity is that which joins the link between the creature and the Creator, and makes man incumbent to the voice of God.

But while we insist that the Scriptures should be perused out of the sense, not of an incumbency, but of a strong necessity, as being the issued orders of Him who upholdeth all things—we except against any idea of painfulness or force being therewith connected. We say necessity, to indicate the strength of the obligation, not its disagreeableness. But, in truth, there is no such feeling of disagreeableness, but the very opposite, attached to every necessity of the Lord's appointing. Light is pleasant to the eyes, though the necessary element of vision. Food is pleasant to the body, though the staple necessary of life. Air is refreshing to the frame, though the necessary element of the breathing spirit. What so refreshing as the necessary element of water to all animated existence? Sleep is the very balm of life to all creatures under the sun. Motion is from infancy to feeblest age the most recreating of things, save rest after motion. Every instinct necessary for preserving or continuing our existence hath in it a pleasure, when indulged in moderation; and the pain which attends excess is the sentinel in the way of danger, and like the sentinel's voice upon the brink of ruin, should be considered as the pleasantest of all, though withdrawing us from the fondest pursuit. In like manner attendance on God's law, though necessary to the soul as wine and milk to the body, will be found equally refreshing; though necessary as light to the eyes, will be found equally cheerful; though necessary as rest to the weary limbs, will be found equally refreshing to our spiritual strength.

A duty which is at all times a duty is a necessity; and this of listening to the voice of God can at no time be dispensed with, and therefore is a stark necessity. The life of the soul can at no time proceed without the present sense and obedience of its Maker's government. His law must be present and keep concert with our most inward thoughts; with which, as we can never dissolve connexion, so ought we never to dissolve connexion with the regulating voice of God. In all

our rising emotions, in all our opening purposes, in all our thoughtful debates, holden upon the propriety of actions, in all the secret counsels of the bosom—the law of God should be consentaneous with the law of nature, or rather should be umpire of the council, seeing nature and nature's laws have receded from the will of God, and become blinded to the best interests of man. The world is apt to look only to the executive part of conduct—to the outward actions, which come forth from behind the curtains of deliberative thought; and as these have stated seasons, and are not constantly recurring, it hath come to pass that the word of God is read and entertained chiefly for the visible parts of life; being used as a sort of elbow-monitor to guard our conduct from offence, rather than a universal law to impregnate all the sources of thought and action. Nay, but, doth the hand ever forget its cunning, or the tongue its many forms of speech, or the soul its various states of feeling and passion? Is there an interval in the wakeful day when the mind ceases to be in fluctuating motion, and is bound in rest like the frozen lake? I do not ask, Is it always vexed like the troubled sea? but doth it ever rest from emotion, and remain steadfast like the solid land? Doth not thought succeed thought, impression impression, recollection recollection, in a ceaseless and endless round? And before this pleasant agitation of vital consciousness can compose itself to rest, the eye must be sealed to light, and the ear stopped to hearing, and the body dead to feeling, and the powers of thought and action, done out, must surrender themselves to repose. And even then, under the death-like desertion of all her faculties, and the oppressive weight of sleep, the mind in her remoter chambers keeps up a fantastical disport of mimic life, as if loth for any instant to forego the pleasures she hath in conscious being. Seeing, then, not even the sleep-locked avenues of sense, nor the worn-out powers of thought and action, nor slumber's soft embrace, can so lull the soul that she should for a while forget her cogitations, and join herself to dark oblivion; seeing that she keeps up the live-long day a busy play of thought, feeling, and action, and during the night keeps vigils in her mysterious chambers, fighting with the powers of oblivion and inertness a battle for

existence;—how should she be able for any instant to do without the presence and operations of her Creator's laws—from which, being at any instant exempted, she is a God unto herself, or the world is her God? From their authority being detached for a season, however brief, she is for that season under foreign control, and rebellious to the Being of whom her faculties are holden, and by whom her powers of life are upheld.

His laws, therefore, should be present in our inward parts, yea, hidden in our hearts, that we offend Him not. They should be familiar as the very consciousness of life. Into the belief being received, they should pass into the memory, grow incorporate with the hidden sources of nature, until the array of our purposes and actions learn to display itself under the banners of the Supreme; and instinct, blind instinct himself, have his eye opened and purged by the light of heaven, and come forth submissive to heaven's voice. They should prove and purify all the sentiments which bind the considerations of life, as affection, friendship, patronage, citizenship, and the like. They should prove and purify all the feelings which instigate the actions of life, as self-interest, generosity, hospitality, duty, and the like. They should bridle the wit, and humour, and levity, and licence of speech, till our words come forth in unison with the word of God. And, in short, they should people the whole soul with that population of new thoughts and new affections which the word reveals concerning God and man, concerning the present and the future world.

Such are my views of the dignity of the Holy Scriptures, and of the fulness of heart and soul with which man should engage in their study. I have expounded them without any restraint, following out the convictions of my mind to the utmost, without interposing any limitations for the sake of human weakness; conceiving it to be my part to state the truth without any compromise, that every one may know his shortcomings, and, knowing his shortcomings, may seek strength from on high. And in the same spirit of uncompromising truthfulness I now proceed to point out the bitter fruits of lowering this ideal mark of perfection in perusing the oracles of God.

As I remarked, when treating of the preparation for this holy avocation, that Christians too frequently permitted themselves to come prepossessed with controversial and doctrinal opinions; so now I am forced with equal plainness to remark what loss they suffer by reading under the influence of their prepossession. These are what they call *doctrines;* as if every moral precept, every spiritual grace, every divine example, every hope, every promise, and every threatening were not a *doctrine:* and these *doctrines* which they exalt into pre-eminence are sacrificed to in all religious expositions, and have grown into popular idols, and frown excommunication upon every one who would doubt their pre-eminence, or insist for a declaration of the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth; and truly, were there not higher fears than the fear even of the religious world, and greater loss than the loss of religious fame, I would hardly venture into an exposition of the evils which have arisen from this bold interference with the proportions of the divine truth.

These doctrines should be like the mighty rivers which fertilise our island, whose waters, before escaping to the sea, have found their way to the roots of each several flower, and plant, and stately tree, and covered the face of the land with beauty and verdure—spreading plenty far and wide for the sustenance of man and beast. So ought these great doctrines of the grace of God in Christ, and the help of God in the Spirit, and our need of both—to carry health and vitality to the whole soul and surface of Christian life. But it hath appeared to us, that, most unlike such wide-spreading streams of fertility, they are often, as it were, confined within rocky channels of intolerance and disputation, where they hold noisy brawl with every impediment, draining off the natural juices of the soil; and, instead of fruits and graces, leaving all behind naked, barren, and unpeopled!

And the catechetical books in which these doctrines are fashioned into form and placed in their pre-eminence, have come to take an almost equal place with the Scriptures in the eye of the churches; and to be come to as a set of traditions, like the traditions of the elders in the Jewish, and the traditions of the fathers in the Catholic Church. Now these cate-

chetical books are exhibitions, not of the whole Bible, as is often thought, but of the abstract doctrines and formal commandments of the Bible: and this not upon any superhuman testimony, but after the judgment of fallible mortals like ourselves. We are not discontented with them on account of that which they do contain, but, on the other hand, we are glad to possess such as our Church doth acknowledge: but we are very discontented that they should have stepped from their proper place of discerning heresy, and preserving in the Church the unity of faith, and usurped it as the great instrument of a religious education, and the great storehouse of religious knowledge, in our families, in our schools, and even in the ministry of our churches. Now they are not good instruments of education, being above the level of youth and the greater part of men, addressing the intellect alone, and that only with logical forms of truth, not with narrative, with example, with eloquence, or with feeling. And as to their being storehouses of religious knowledge—they want, to my mind, the most essential staples of our religion; for there is in them no authoritative voice of my God, that I should fear them; no tender sympathetic voice of my Saviour, that I should tenderly affect them in return; no unction of the Holy One, that I should depend upon them for healing virtue. All I do is to believe them, and this not until I have carried an appeal to the word of God,—which surely were as worthy a first appeal and a maiden faith. Moreover, there is in them no feature of Christian imagery to catch the conception; nor patterns of holy men to awaken the imitation of excellence, and draw on the admiration of holiness; no joyful strains of hope and promised bliss to rouse nature's indolence; nor eager remonstrances against the world's ways; nor stern denouncements, like the thunder of heaven, upon the head of its transgressions; nor pathetic bursts of sympathy over nature's melancholy conditions, and her more melancholy prospects. On these accounts most indubitable it is, that the rich and mellow word, with God's own wisdom mellow, and rich with all mortal and immortal attractions, is a better net to catch childhood, to catch manhood withal, than these pieces of man's wording, however true to Scripture, or compounded

of the ingredients of human wisdom. From the prevalence of taste for doctrinal and catechetical statements, there hath sprung the following succession of practical evils, over which we most bitterly lament.

The Scriptures are not read for the high ends of teaching the soul practical wisdom, and overcoming the errors of all her faculties, of all her judgments, and of all her ways. The word, which is diversified for men of all gifts, cometh to be prized chiefly as a treasury of intellectual truth, elements of religious dogmatism, often an armoury of religious warfare. Our spirits become intolerant of all who find in the Bible any tenets differing from our own, as if they meditated an invasion upon the integrity of our faith, and were plotting the downfal of religion itself. An accurate statement of opinion from the pulpit, from the lips of childhood, from the death-bed of age, becomes all in all; whereas it is nothing if not conjoined with the utterances of a Christian spirit, and the evidences of a renewed life. Who can bear the logical and metaphysical aspect with which religion looks out from the temples of this land, playing about the head, but starving the well-springs of the heart, and drying up the fertile streams of a holy and charitable life! For an accurate systematic form is the last perfection of knowledge; and a systematic thinker is the perfection of an educated man. Therefore, it is high intolerance of the far greater number, whose heart and whose affections may be and are their master faculties, to present nothing but intellectual food, or that chiefly: and, moreover, it is a religious spoliation of heavenly wisdom, which hath a strain fitted to every mood of the human mind; and it is an unfeeling, unfaithful dealing between God and the creatures whom He hath been at such charges to save. And to look suspicious upon those who are attracted to the sacred page by its gracious pictures of the divine goodness, and love it with a simple answer of affection to its affectionate sayings, or a simple answer of hope to its abundant promises—to undervalue those who feed their souls with its spiritual psalmody, or direct their life by its weighty proverbs, reckoning an authority and grace of God to reside in every portion of it—to suspect those who live on devotion, on acknowledgments of

Providence, and imitation of Christ, because they cannot couch their simple faith and feeling in technical and theological phrase, but sink dumb when the high points of controversy are handled—all these—the baneful effects of holding so much acquaintance with formularies of doctrine, and so little with the word itself—so much acquaintance with the religious spirit of the age and country, and so little with the spirit of God, argue a narrow form of religion, and an uncharitableness of spirit, from which I pray God to deliver all with whom I have to do in my religious walk and conversation.

But let me drop this strain of censure which the honour of the Bible hath forced me to maintain against my better liking, and speak persuasively in your ear for a nobler and more enlarged perception of the truth. Pour ye out your whole undivided heart before the oracles of God. Give your enlarged spirit to the communion of His word. Be free; be disentangled. Let it teach; let it reprove; let it correct; let it instruct in righteousness; and by its wonderful delineations of the secrets of the divine nature, and of the future destinies of the human race, let it elevate you higher than the loftiest poetry doth: and let it carry you deeper, by its pictures of our present and future wretchedness, than the most pathetic sentiment ever penned by the novelist; and let it take affection captive by its pictures of divine mercy and forgiveness, more than the sweetest eloquence; let it transport you with indignation at that with which it is indignant, and take you with passion when it is impassioned; when it blames be ye blamed; when it exhorts be ye exhorted; when it condescends to argument, by its arguments be ye convinced. Be free to take all its moods, and to catch all its inspirations. Then shall you become instinct with all Christian feeling, and pregnant with all holy fruits, "thoroughly furnished for every good word and work."

Why, in modern times, do we not take from the word that sublimity of design and gigantic strength of purpose which made all things bend before the saints, whose praise is in the word and the church of God? Why have the written secrets of the Eternal become less moving than the fictions of fancy, or the periodical works of idle literature; and their impressiveness

died away into the imbecility of a tale that hath been often told? Not because man's spirit hath become more weak. Was there ever an age in which it was more patient of research, or restless after improvement? Not because the Spirit of God hath become backward in His help, or the word divested of its truth; but because we treat it not as the all-accomplished wisdom of God—the righteous setting works of men alongside of it, or masters over it—the world altogether apostatising from it unto folly. We come to meditate it, like armed men to consult of peace, our whole mind occupied with insurrectionary interests. We suffer no captivity of its truth. Faith, which should brood with expanded wings over the whole heavenly legend, imbibing its entire spirit—what hath it become? a name to conjure up theories and hypotheses upon. Duty likewise hath fallen into a few formalities of abstaining from amusements, and keeping up severities—instead of denoting a soul girt with all its powers for its Maker's will. Religion also hath become a set of opinions and party distinctions separated from high endowments, and herding with cheap popular accomplishments—a mere serving-maid of every day life; instead of being the mistress of all earthly, and the preceptress of all heavenly, sentiments—the very queen of all high gifts, graces, and perfections, in every walk of life!

To be delivered from this dwarfish exhibition of that plant which our heavenly Father hath planted, take up this holy book. Let your devotions gather warmth from its various exhibitions of the nature and attributes of God. Let the displays of His power overawe you, and the goings forth of His majesty still you into reverend observance. Let His uplifted voice awake the slumber of your spirits, and every faculty burn in adoration of that image of the invisible God which His word reveals. If nature is reverend before Him, how much more the spirit of man for whom He rideth forth in His state! Let His holiness, before which the pure seraph veils his face, and His justice, before which the heavens are rebuked, humble our frail spirits in the dust, and awaken all their conscious guilt. Then let the richness of His mercy strike us dumb with amazement, and His offered grace revive

our hopes anew; and let His Son, coming forth with the embraces of His love, fill our spirits with rapture. Let us hold Him fast in sweet communion; exchange with Him affection's kindest tokens; and be satisfied with the sufficiency of His grace; and let the strength of His Spirit be our refuge, His all-sufficient strength our buckler and our trust!

Then, stirred up through all her powers, and awakened from the deep sleep of nature and oblivion of God, which among visible things she indulgeth, our soul will come forth from the communion of the word full of divine energy and ardour, prepared to run upon this world's theatre the race of duty for the prize of life everlasting. She will erect herself, beyond the measures and approbation of men, into the measures and approbation of God, and become like the saints of old, who, strengthened by such repasts of faith, "subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, and turned to flight the armies of the aliens."

III.

THE OBEYING OF THE WORD OF GOD.

THE portion of truth which one can for himself examine is so mere a scantling of what is needful for the service of his life, and has in it such instability when not under the helm of authority, human or divine, that men have found it necessary to lay up and patronise a store of common truth, out of which each may be furnished ready to hand when he comes to need it, without the trouble of discovering for himself. This common store consists of the customs established, the opinions popular, the laws instituted, the private duties expected, and the manners approved. These are a grand legacy transmitted from successive generations, the accumulated wealth of the wit and wisdom of our fathers—in which to become conversant we are for nearly a third of our life regarded as under age, wards of our parents, and incompetent in great matters to act for ourselves. If we set any of these traditions aside, following our own inventions, or giving scope to our personal freedom, we are eyed with suspicion, or punished as defaulters, and, in capital matters, banished from good society, from our native land, and from life itself. Thus it fares with human kind; they are knit generation to generation. Our fathers bind us, and we shall bind our children. No man is free. All men are constrained by an authority over which they have no control, and are in their turn controlling others who have yet to be.

Let no man, therefore, in the pride of his heart, revolt from the traditions of God as an imposition upon the freedom of his estate. If the wisdom of God take no hand in the ordination of our life, then the wisdom of our fathers will do it all. But for us we shall be the same governed and shackled crea-

tures as before. We may change the place of our residence for a country where God's traditions are unknown, and thereby change the degree or form of the bondage, but the necessity of it for peace and enjoyment will still remain. We may change our sphere in life to one where God's traditions are trampled under foot, and find a momentary release, but soon the habits of our new condition will become as peremptory as those of the old. In truth, there is no deliverance. Society is beforehand with us; and along with its beautified fields, and happy inventions, and manifold conditions of comfort, hands down to us as the price of these a thousand laws and restraints upon the freedom of our conduct.

Such being the hereditary bondage of all ages, and of all nations, those are the happiest who have had the wisest and most virtuous ancestors, to derive to them only wholesome restraints upon the uncertainty of individual judgment and the waywardness of individual will;—those being the most blessed of all, who have been favoured with laws and institutions from the perfection of wisdom which is with Him who knows the bounds of man's capacity, and the limits within which his happiness and honour reside. For the wisest lawgivers being little acquainted with the secret workings of their own heart, whose mysterious organisation is far seated beyond our observation, are still less able to comprehend another's nature, so as to prescribe with infallible certainty for its government. The best they can do is to point out some palpable errors to be avoided, some gross delinquencies to be shunned, some common rights to be revered, some noble actions to be honoured, some base actions to be disgraced. They can buoy some few of the shoals and rocks of life, but the tides and currents which pervade it are beyond their management. They can construct ports and havens for us to touch at, but the manning and equipping and propelling the vessel is with God alone. He who gave the soul her powers, and to all His works their properties, can alone sweetly accommodate them with ordinances. The best attempts of lawgivers are but rude artifices for compassing coarse designs, aiming at the security of some visible and external good, and that attaining not without great waste of private liberty and happiness: whereas

God, being perfectly acquainted with our most inward principles, and with all the shortest and safest roads to happiness, can with no more constraint than is necessary, carry us through all the departments and degress of excellence. He, therefore, is the only fit lawgiver; His statutes the only liberty; all other obedience is an acquiescence in that of whose perfect rectitude we are nothing sure, and hath in it a kind of servility,—but this is honour, this is exaltation, to employ all our powers for the purposes for which they were given, and after the rules of Him who gave them.

The question, therefore, of a religious or an irreligious life, when thus opened up, no longer shews itself to be a question of liberty or of compulsion, but of one kind of authority against another. There are two competitors for our service, God and the world; and the question is, Which will we obey? Will we yield to the sovereignty of the various laws and customs which, upon coming to man's estate, we find established; time-serving what has in it no wit but the wisdom of man, and no stability but the power of man, and which we had no say whatever in constructing, and which accommodates itself but ill to our conditions? or will we yield to the sovereignty of those institutes which have in them no seed of change, which are softly framed to sway the heart, and to insinuate into all its corners the harmony and peace of heaven, which supply the deficiencies of our wisdom, and stay the swervings of our life, and conduct us at length to the unchangeable happiness and honour of the life to come.

And yet, though the question when thus accurately stated stands beyond all reasonable doubt, and leaves us without excuse in preferring human authority to divine, such is the antipathy and resistance of human nature to God, that His statutes which rejoice the heart are obstinately withstood; while to the ordinances and customs of men we willingly yield our necks. There be multitudes with whom the voice of the Lord of hosts hath no sway against the voice of fashion; and the saintly graces of the spirit of God no chance against the graces of polished life. Multitudes, with whom the calls of low sensual instinct prevail against the calls of the Almighty to glory and honour, and to whom life's commonest drudgery

is an enjoyment compared with the observance of a godly custom, or the obedience of a Christian precept!

This reluctance to divine, and compliance with human institutions, might seem to bear against that which was advanced above, upon the superior wisdom and suitableness of the former, and to prove that God, in devising for human improvement, had failed in His purpose. We think it good, therefore, to shew how this reluctance comes about, and how we find ourselves at man's estate so enamoured of the world's bondage as to feel it like a second nature, not to be given up for the service of God without the most violent and painful effort. Which inquiry, by revealing the sources of our enmity to the law of God, will shew the time at which, and the means by which that enmity may be most successfully withstood.

In the beginning our enmity was as strong to the world's institutions as it is now to the institutions of God. For there is in every nature a preference of its own will, and a reluctance to surrender it to another. And it is not till after many struggles that a mother gains the mastery of her child, and not till after much discipline that a youth gives willingly in to the tasks of his teacher. And to the moral and decent customs of life we know that many youths can never bring themselves to conform at all, but set them at open defiance, or hide in secrecy their violation. In so much that after twenty years of training to what is honourable and good, never omitted for a day; and hardly for a single hour, with the constant presence of examples, and the constant terror of censures, such is the urgency of nature, and her reluctance to control, that a youth shall no sooner remove from the neighbourhood of his early restraints than he will cast them at his feet, and take the whole scope of his self-willedness. And thus many run to ruin when they leave the home of their father and the eye of their friends. Let us not be amazed, therefore, that the statutes of the Lord, to which there is no constant nor sufficient training of parents and of masters, and which take under their control not only the form and fashion of life, but the whole thoughts and intentions of the heart should fare the same, and have a fearful struggle with nature's independence.

By the same means of early discipline and example by

which we were brought to acquiesce in the government of our parents, the mastery of our teachers, and the authority of life's many forms and customs, we shall most likely be brought to acquiesce in the statutes of the Lord. And as no parent who wished his child to be a well-doing member of society would, for the first years of his life, turn him adrift from counsel and correction, but find for him masters to instruct, and patterns to copy after, adding to all the influence of his own parental authority and affection—even so, if you would have your child to flourish in religious life, you must not sequester the subject of religion from your table or your household, nor keep him in the dark till he arrive at years of reflection; but from the first dawn of thought and effort of will, teach him with a winning voice, and with a gentle hand lead him into the ways of God. The raw opinion, that a certain maturity of judgment must be tarried for before entering into religious conference with our children, comes of a notion which pervades the religious world, that religion rests upon the right apprehension of certain questions in theology, to which mature years are necessary; whereas it rests upon the authority of God, which a child can comprehend so soon as it can the authority of its father; upon the love of Christ, which a child can comprehend so soon as it can the love of its mother; upon the assistance of the Spirit, which it can comprehend so soon as it is alive to the need of instruction or help from its parents; upon the difference between right and wrong, which it may be taught so soon as it can perform the one and avoid the other. There is a religion of childhood, and a religion of manhood; the former standing mostly in authority, the latter in authority and reason conjoined; the former referring chiefly to words and actions, the latter embracing also principles and sentiments. But because you cannot instil into children the full maturity of religious truth, is no more an argument for neglecting to travel with them on religion, than it would be an argument to refuse teaching them obedience to yourself and respect of others till they could comprehend the principles on which parental obedience and friendly respect are grounded.

Now, we must confess it hath seldom fallen to our lot to

see religion taught in the family with that diligence with which good manners, parental respect, and deference to custom are taught. The right and wrong of things is not often distinguished with reference to the divine commandment, but with reference to the opinion of others and the ways of the world. Excellence is not urged from the approbation of God, and the imitation of Christ, and the rewards of heaven, but out of the emulation of rivals, and the ambition of this world's places. Companions are not sought according to their piety, their virtue, and their general worth, so much as according to their rank and their prospects in life. To which neglect of means, parents do often add the practical contradiction of all religion, swearing perhaps, perhaps quarrelsome at home, entertaining worldly views of most subjects, religious views of almost none; and for six days in the week banishing the face and form of religion from the eyes of their household. What glorious opportunities these for the despite of Satan to revel in! The mind impressible as wax, wondering after novelty, and thirsting after knowledge of good and ill, unbound by habit and roving in its freedom, from within and from without solicited to evil, in this the spring-time of human character, when ye the husbandmen of your children's minds should be labouring the soil, and spreading it out to the Sun of righteousness, and sowing it with the seed of the everlasting word; ye are leaving it waste and undefended, for the enemy to enter in and sow it with the tares of wickedness, to take root and flourish, and choke any good seed which the ministers of grace may chance afterwards to scatter!

Have ye the conscience to think that for this neglect an occasional visit to the Church catechism of a Sabbath night will compensate? or can you believe that certain words lying dormant in the memory during the years of budding manhood will operate like an eastern talisman, or a Catholic scapular, against the encounter of evil? Why should the wounded prejudices of any man wince while thus we speak, as if it were not God's truth we spoke? Have we not the experience within ourselves of having been mastered by this world's ambitious schools, albeit not untutored in the theological lore of childhood, and have ye not the same experience?

Feel ye not, when ye would set your hearts in order before the Lord, that they are all like an unweeded garden, and that you have to begin by tearing and lacerating the loves, admirations and proprieties, which in early life cast their seducements over you, without note of warning from parents, or from the books in which your parents and your masters schooled you? Take heed, then, and resist the evil in its first beginning. Give the enemy the spring season, and you generally give him the summer, the autumn and the winter of life, with all eternity to boot; but tutor your children in the institutions of God, with a constant watchfulness and a patient perseverance, beginning with restraint, then with soft persuasion leading on, then with arguments of duty and interest confirming; and in the end habit, which at first is adverse, will turn propitious, and the blessing of God promised to the right training of children, will keep them from leaving His paths when they are old.

This, therefore, is the secret of our aversion at man's estate to the laws of God—the want of a proper selection and application of means in early life. It is not that these laws are ill adapted to our nature, whereof they are the guides, the sweeteners, and the perfecters; but that our nature hath got under adverse government, and been fed up with indulgences, and degraded with services from which it cannot now without great pain and exertion be delivered. It is not that God hath withheld His blessing, which blessing I understand to be like an atmosphere around every man, that he hath at all times free liberty to breathe in through the use of appointed means; but it is, that in our youth we were not properly applied to, and misthrove for want of proper spiritual treatment. Far from us be the unholy office of reflecting upon our parents, whose faults, whatever they be, their children should modestly hide, not rudely discover. Further be it from us to excuse their unworthy children, who, had they listened to a father's counsel, or been softened by a mother's tears, had not far wandered from wise and prudent paths. But further from us than both, be the impious thought, that there is any son of man whom the Almighty doth not wish to become a son of light, and for whose growth in grace, from very childhood, He hath not set forth a sufficient supply in the everlasting gospel!

We blame not our parents—ourselves we excuse not, while we justify our Father which is in heaven. Parents may be more parental, children may be more obedient, but our heavenly Father cannot exceed the boundless dimensions of His love to all mankind. But that our parents and guardians have failed in wisdom or care, and allowed us to grow up under the control of the world's customs, is not a reason which God will accept for our remaining disobedient when we have arrived at the knowledge of His testimonies. Then it becomes a question between our soul and its Creator; and no apology upon earth will avail us any longer. However closely entwined with our interests or affections be the habits of the present world, however productive of pleasure or advantage, God expects us, upon coming to the knowledge of His will, to renounce them forthwith, to forsake father and mother, and brother and sister, yea, and our own life, in order to follow Christ, whom He hath sent to call us from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to serve the living God. And to the end of bringing about a sweet acquiescence in His demands, He hath framed His revelation full of the most tender invitations, and the most powerful appeals to all the feelings of the human heart, so that we are left without excuse if we continue to obey man rather than God. In the revelation of His will he hath addressed us as immortal beings, for whose salvation from sin and misery He hath sent His only begotten Son into the world: not to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might have life. At the same time He hath set forth to us inevitable perdition if we turn not by repentance from the world, to live no longer to the will of the flesh, but to Him that died for us and rose again. Thus to the arguments which have been already handled of the dignity of the lawgiver, and the truth and wisdom of the laws, is added the high argument of our own everlasting well-being. It is human nature to consult for her own happiness, and therefore He hath interwoven our duty with our interest, and put us into the alternative of obeying Him, or ruining ourselves. Now as this question of advantage is one which every person can enter into, and is truly the question into which every other reduces itself, we feel called on, in thus pleading for the divine oracles, to state it on both

sides in all plainness and sincerity and truth. For what availeth it to mantle through delicacy what God hath thought it wise to reveal? Therefore, at the risk of being thought uncivil, we shall not hesitate to state the terrible consequence of disobeying the statutes of the Lord, and to balance and endeavour to counteract those of fugitive enjoyments with which the world holdeth man in ignoble bondage.

This, then, is the simple truth, that if you obey not the Scriptures ye shall surely perish. You may despise the honour done you by the Majesty above, you may spurn the sovereignty of Almighty God, you may revolt from creation's universal rule to bow before its Creator, and stand in momentary rebellion against His ordinances; His overtures of mercy you may cast contempt on, and crucify afresh the Royal Personage who bore them; you may riot in your licentious liberty for a while, and make light of His indulgence and long-suffering. But come at length it will, when revenge shall array herself to go forth, and anguish shall attend her, and from the wheels of their chariot ruin and dismay shall shoot far and wide among the enemies of the king, whose desolation shall not tarry, and whose destruction shall be swift as the wing of the whirlwind—hopeless as the conclusion of eternity and the reversion of doom. Then around the fiery concave of the wasteful pit the clang of grief shall ring, and the flinty wretch who in life repelled tender mercy shall now find the door of spurned mercy for ever barred; and the soft and gentle spirit, which dissolved in voluptuous pleasures, shall now dissolve in weeping sorrows, and outbursting lamentations. And the gay glory of time shall depart; and sportful liberty shall be bound for ever in the chain of obdurate necessity. The green earth, with all her blooming beauty and bowers of peace, shall depart. The morning and evening salutations of kinsmen, and the ever welcome voice of friendship, and the tender whispering of full-hearted affection, shall depart, for the sad discord of weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. And the tender names of children, and father and mother, and wife and husband, with the communion of domestic love and affection, and the inward touches of natural instinct,—which family compact, when uninvaded by discord, wraps the live-

long day into one swell of tender emotion, making earth's lowly scenes to breathe of heaven itself—all, all shall pass away: and instead shall come the level lake that burneth, and the solitary dungeon, and the desolate bosom, and the throes and tossings of horror and hopelessness, and the worm that dieth not, and the fire that is not quenched.

'Tis written, 'tis written, 'tis sealed of heaven, and a few years shall reveal it all. Even so it is to happen to the despisers of holy writ. With this in arrear, what boots liberty, pleasure, enjoyment—all within the hour-glass of time, or the round earth's continent, all the sensibilities of life, all the powers of man, all the attractions and affections of woman!

Terror hath sitten enthroned on the brows of tyrants, and made the heart of nations quake; but upon this peaceful volume there sits a terror to make the mute world stand aghast. Yet not the terror of tyranny neither, but the terror of justice, which abides the scorners of the Most High God, and the revilers of His most gracious Son. And is it not just, though terrible, that He who brooked not in heaven one moment's disaffection, but launched the rebel host to hell, and bound them evermore in chains of darkness, should also do His sovereign will upon the disaffected of this earth, whom He hath long endured and pleaded with in vain? We are fallen, 'tis true—we found the world fallen into ungodly customs, 'tis true—here are we full grown and mature in disaffection, most true. And what can we do to repair a ruined world, and regain a lost purity? Nothing—nothing can we do of ourselves to such a task. But God hath provided for this pass of perplexity; He hath opened a door of reconciliation, and laid forth a store of help, and asks at our hand no impossibilities, only what our condition is equal to in concert with His freely offered grace.

These topics of terror, it is very much the fashion of the time to turn the ear from, as if it were unmanly to fear pain. Call it manly or unmanly, it is nature's strongest instinct—the strongest instinct of all animated nature: and to avoid it is the chief impulse of our actions. Punishment is that which law founds upon, and parental authority in the first instance, and every human institution from which it is painful to be

dismembered. Not only is pain not to be inflicted without high cause, nor endured without much trouble, but not to be looked on without a pang: as ye may judge, when ye see the cold knife of the surgeon enter the patient's flesh, or the heavy wain grind onward to the neck of a prostrate child. Despise pain, I wot not what it means. Bodily pain you may despise in a good cause, but let there be no motive, let it be God's simple visitation, spasms of the body for example, then how many give it licence, how many send for the physician to stay it? Truly, there is not a man in being, whom bodily pain, however slight, if incessant, will not turn to fury or to insensibility—embittering peace, eating out kindliness, contracting sympathy, and altogether deforming the inner man. Fits of acute suffering which are soon to be over, any disease with death in the distance may be borne; but take away hope, and let there be no visible escape, and he is more than mortal that can endure. A drop of water incessantly falling upon the head is found to be the most excruciating of all torture, which proveth experimentally the truth of what hath been said.

Hell, therefore, is not to be despised like a sick bed, if any of you be so hardy as to despise a sick bed. There are no comforting kindred, no physician's aid, no hope of recovery, no melancholy relief of death, no sustenance of grace. It is no work of earthly torture or execution with a good cause to suffer in, and a beholding world or posterity to look on, and a good conscience to approve, with scornful words to revenge cruel actions, and the constant play of resolution or study of revenge. It is no struggle of mind against its material envelopments and worldly ills, like stoicism, which was the sentiment of virtue nobly downbearing the sense of pain. I cannot render it to fancy, but I can render it to fear. Why may it not be the agony of all diseases the body is susceptible of, with the anguish of all deranged conceptions and disordered feelings, stinging recollections, present remorses, bursting indignations, with nothing but ourselves to burst on, dismal prospects, fearful certainties, fury, folly, and despair?

I know it is not only the fashion of the world, but of Christians, to despise the preaching of future woe; but the methods

of modern schools which are content with one idea for their gospel, and one motive for their activity, I willingly renounce for the broad methods of the Scripture, which bring out ever and anon the recesses of the future to upbear duty and downbear wickedness, and assail men by their hopes and fears as often as by their affections, by the authority of God as often as by the constraining love of Christ, by arguments of reason and of interest no less. Therefore, sustained by the frequent example of our Saviour, the most tender-hearted of all beings, and who to man hath shewn the most excessive love, I return, and give men to wit, that the despisers of God's law and of Christ's gospel shall by no means escape the most rigorous fate. Pain, pain inexorable, tribulation and anguish shall be their everlasting doom! The smoke of their torments ascendeth for ever and ever. One frail thread snapped, and they are down to the bottomless pit. Think of him who had a sword suspended by a hair over his naked neck while he lay and feasted,—think of yourselves suspended over the pit of perdition by the flimsy thread of life—a thread near worn, weak in a thousand places, ever threatened by the fatal shears which soon shall clip it!

If you call for a truce to such terrific pictures, then call for mercy against the more terrific realities: but if you be too callous or too careless to call for mercy and ensue repentance, I may give you truce to the pictures, but God will give no abeyance to the realities into which they are dropping evermore, and you shall likewise presently drop, if you repent not.

But if you be aroused to think, let us argue and bring things to an issue. What hinders you from giving your souls to the divine institutions? Early habits hinder, the world's customary fashions hinder, and nature's leanings the other way hinder, and passion hinders, and a whole insurrectionary host of feelings musters against the change. Well, be it granted that a troop of joys must be put to flight, and a whole host of pleasant feelings be subdued. What is lost? Is honour lost? Is fortune lost? Is God's providence scared away? Hath the world slipt from beneath your feet, and does the air of heaven no longer sustain you? Has life deceased, or are your faculties of happiness departed? Change,

the dread of change, that is all. The change of society and habits, with the loss of some few perishable joys.

Change! Is not that as great a change when your physician chambers you up, and restricts your company to nurses, and your diet to simples? Is not that as great a change when you leave the dissipated city, outworn with its excitements, and live with solitude and inconvenience in your summer quarters? And is not that a greater change which stern law makes, when it mures up your person and gives you outcasts to company with? And where is the festive life of those who sail the wide ocean; and where the gaieties of the campaigning soldier; and how does the wandering beggar brook his scanty life? And if for the sake of a pained limb you will undergo the change, will you not for the removal of eternal pains of spirit and flesh? If for a summer of refreshment amongst the green of earth, and by the freshness of ocean, ye will undergo the change, will ye not for the rich contents of heaven? And if at the command of law ye will, and if for gain the sailor will, and for honour the soldier will, and for necessity the strolling beggar will; men and brethren, will ye not, to avoid hell, to reach heaven, to obey the voice of God, to gain the inheritance of wealth and honour, and to feed your spirit's starved necessities—oh! men, will ye not muster resolution to enterprise the change?

Bring manly fortitude to this question, I entreat you, and look it in the face; compare these two alternatives—the world's principles and customs, Christ's principles and customs. When you entered into life you were equally strangers to both, predisposed to have your own will in everything, and reluctant to resign it either to the institutions of your ancestors, or to the institutions of Christ. By a greater aptitude of nature, and the neighbourhood of more examples, and the presence of more immediate rewards and punishments, and a youth of continual training, you have grown into the school of the world where you are enchanted and spell-bound, I know not with what; but sure you are bewitched, or with thraldom worn down and unmanned. 'Tis not better fortune that holds you; that I deny: nor more accomplishments of mind, nor larger bounds of feeling, nor sublimer thoughts,

nor more generous actions, nor more peaceful moments; which I affirm to be all on the other side. What, then, is the mighty gain? A few gay smiles of companionship, a few momentary gratifications dear bought at the price of after-thoughts and after-depressions; a few heady excesses of spirit, and extravagances of language, and irregularities of conduct; this is merely the sum total of the benefit. Are you free? Not a jot. You are the slaves of the customs, and dare not on your peril depart from one of them. You call religion a bondage; yes, it is the bondage of angels strong and seraphs blessed; nature's well-pleased bondage to her Maker, the creature's reverence for his Creator; but yours, yours is a bondage to idle fleeting customs, narrow rules of men like yourselves, whose statutes enslave you. You have no privileges worth the naming. You have heaven forfeited. You have hell forestalled. Pitiful drudgery. And this is what you are in love with and cannot leave. So were the swinish herd enamoured of Circe's cup, forgetful of their former noble selves.

I wish I could disenchant you, that you might perceive the blessed truth, and love it—which I see not, but I may, seeing God grants His blessing to the weakest instrument. Let me speak a moment of the nature of this change, and if ever, now God send me persuasive words.

Ye take up the thing amiss when you think, as is too often represented, that it is a change to be succeeded in upon the spur of resolution. A beginning it must have, and that most noticeable, when from leaving God's face and favour, you turn timorously to seek them again. But for its completion the age of Methuselah were insufficient. Men are never converted, but always converting; saints never built up, but always building up. Now, herein you do greatly err. Unless you change and master nature at once, you give it up for hopeless, and fall down into the quietus of man's total inability and forlornness. This is the grossness of stupidest error. Knowledge of God's will is not had at once, cases of conscience are not settled at once, nor is the ability to overcome derived at once. The conversion is the new birth, but to be born is not to be the man complete in feature and in mind,

which groweth out of knowledge, experience, discipline of youth, observation of life, and the thousand appointed steps between the almost unconscious babe, and the accomplished man. Even so, the new birth is but the first germ of religion in the soul, which hath to be cherished, nursed, guarded, trained, and taught by methods and means of grace as manifold as natural strength is reared by. Therefore, so that your souls are longing after God, your ears drinking in His counsel, your feet moving, though faint, still moving in the path, be of good cheer, go on and prosper. Nay, so that you are losing conceit of sin by reason of better conceptions, and waxing in fear of future issues, and meditating your mortality more, it is symptomatic of good, go on and prosper. Despair not because you are not perfect, neither turn back because you frequently fall.

And, ye advanced Christians, do not despise this day of small things in a younger brother, neither go to impose on him all your burdens, nor to minister to him the strongest meat which you feed on; but give God-speed to any endeavour after good, however small. His very aspirations despise not, his imperfections do not sorely rebuke. Strengthen the hands that hang down, and the feeble knees confirm. Strengthen by encouragement and support, do not by rebuke and censure drive him to distraction.

Nevertheless, though this change may appear in various quarters of the horizon of a sinner's thoughts and interests, there are marks in its progress which may be laid down. Discontent with oneself, a fear of God's displeasure, a desire after the knowledge of His will, an acquiescence in His estimate of our sinfulness, a joyful reception of the Saviour, a growing peace, and with it a strict obedience, a sense of great weakness, a seeking for help by prayer, perusal of the word, and waiting for the Spirit, and a progress in the way everlasting;—these things, not by order, as if there were an infallible order, which some in their witless unobservance of Christian life do imagine, but certainly, most certainly these marks will reveal themselves in the course of the progression; and such, to whom these truths are not disclosing or disclosed, are not Christianising or Christianised.

Allow me, then, to gather up the whole that hath been said, and to leave it to your own conscience and the blessing of God. This world into which we are born, age after age, is marshalled into two parties—those who give heed to the Lord's revelations, and thereunto conform their lives—those who give not heed to them, but set up a system of life according to hereditary law, honour, or custom. To the one or the other we must submit, there is not one man in a thousand who dissents from both, and maketh head for himself. Whichever you destine your children to, to that breed them from their cradle. Those that have not been so trained, but find themselves confederate with the world, have only to enter themselves to the school of Christ; nothing doubting of success, if they consult and obey the word of God. They will feel it new, and therefore seemingly more restrictive, yet, in truth, not more restrictive than the old, but otherwise more liberal, more generous, more ennobling, more peaceful, and more joyful.

Come over, cast in your lot with the saints; you have everything to gain—peace of conscience, a divine joy, a fellowship with God, a special providence, a heritage of promise and blessing, a triumphant death, and a crown of everlasting life. The choice of men are here—the prime specimens of manhood, the royal priesthood and chosen generation of mankind—and worth domestic, with piety, her guardian genius is here; and worth public, with charity, her guardian genius is here; and enterprise heroic, with faith, her guardian genius is here; and the chief fathers of science and knowledge have likewise clave with the saints; and the greatest inventors, the inventors of reformation in all worthy matters are here; apostles and prophets and patriarchs are here; and, finally, the first-born of every creature, who is God over all blessed for ever! Amen.

IV.

THE OBEYING OF THE WORD OF GOD.

WE have discoursed upon the preparation necessary for holding intercourse with the word of God, summoning your souls to it as to a most honourable interview, and to a feast of heavenly wisdom. We have pointed out the place which you should occupy, and the part which you should perform, while listening to the voice of your Creator, and receiving the law at His mouth,—giving ear as the light did when summoned from its primeval residence, or the sun, and the moon, and the stars: and as mute nature listens still. We have searched into that strong reluctance which we bear to the divine law, and sought to overcome it by the fearful picture of the desolation which overtakes the impenitent; arguing sore between the world and the word of God, and praying you to be reconciled for the sake of Christ. Heaven grant that we may not have spoken in vain! And now that we address ourselves to a loftier argument, may His Spirit fill us with knowledge and affection, that His mysterious and momentous truths may suffer no disparagement from our weak conception and feebler utterance. The argument for which we pray to be enabled, is the good which will accrue to all who search and entertain and obey the Scriptures after the manner we have set forth. And we shall display it under three heads: the knowledge thence obtained; the life of heavenly enterprise thereby begotten; and the eternal reward reserved in store for those who walk after the precepts of the Lord.

The eternal power and Godhead of our Creator, says St Paul, speak through the things which are made. But the oracle of the works of God, however loud in commendation of His power and providence, is not easy to be explored

by the multitude, who, little enlightened by knowledge, are much taken up with the necessary avocations of life. And those who are conversant with it, do generally, in the act of consulting, stop short in admiration of the temple itself, paying their reverence to its richness and decorations, but seldom reaching the inward sanctuary where the oracle is heard. Either nature hath changed her song, or man hath lost his faculty of interpreting it; for into his ear she now uttereth many a strain in commendation of herself, few in commendation of her God. And natural knowledge, while it is thus divorced from the knowledge of nature's God, satisfieth not the spirit of man, which must join league with another spirit in order to taste its true delights. For what communion hath the soul with the superficial beauty of the earth, which they call taste, or with the knowledge of matter's changes, which they call science? The human soul groans in languor till she finds a fellow spirit, or a generous cause of human welfare, to engage her affections; then begimneth her revelry of delight. Unfeigned friendship, chaste love, domestic affection, pure, heavenward devotion,—who compares the intensity and delight of these unions with the stale and heartless sympathy there is between a naturalist and his museum, or a scholar and his books?

Even such languor, such dissatisfaction finds the soul, when, without a guide, she goes to seek God in His natural universe, groping about and unrested, hungering for larger insight, perplexed with difficulties, and finding "no end, in wandering mazes lost." How refreshing to such a longing spirit when the dark cloud God has retired within, bursts, and in visible glory He displays Himself to His benighted children, speaking to them in an intelligible voice, and revealing the mysteries of His nature! Then cometh rest, and with rest refreshment and enlargement of the soul. There is no cause beyond this first cause to search after. Than God the mind can ascend no higher, and is satisfied with His likeness: in which there is perfection without a blemish, which we range the world for in vain—justice never perverted, which it has been the glory of man to live under—mercy, with all the tender affections which pacify and harmonise the life of man—holiness, holding a

spotless reign over the happy fields of heaven—all composed and peaceful within that same Being, who is clothed with the elemental powers, armed with the thunderbolt, and served with the army of heaven and the voice of fate.

Do ye love to meditate nobleness of nature? Here it is infinitely noble. Do ye love to contemplate stupendous power put forth in soft acts of goodness? Behold it here, pouring the full river of pleasure through the universe. Here is the Father of all families, from the highest order in the heavens above to the lowest tribe upon the earth beneath, serving out justice and liberality to them all. What would you more to fill your mind with than the idea of God, which, while it fills, elevates, enlarges and refines. With what ardour men behold their favourites of the present and past ages, aiming generously to equal or excel them. What silent musings over their history, and estimation of their parts! Why not rise higher to contemplate the revealed image of the invisible God? He is not seen; neither are the worthies of a former age. They are written of. He is written of. The one is as lawful an object of thought and imitation as the other.

Nay, the closer to bring you into fellowship, He hath despatched from His highest sphere the image of Himself to act the divine part among earthly scenes, and seeing we had fallen from His neighbourhood, and could not regain our lost estate, hath He sent forth His own Son, made of a woman, made under the law, down to our sphere, to bind the link between heaven and earth, which seemed for ever to have been broken. Who clothes Himself in the raiment of flesh; puts on like passions and affections, and presents Himself to be beheld, talked with, and handled of the sons of men. He opens up the heart of God, and shews it wondrous tender to His fallen creatures. He opens up His own heart, and shews it devoted to death for their restoration. He stretches out His hand; disease and death flee away. He opens His lips; loving-kindness drops upon the most sinful of men. He opens a school of discipline for heaven; none is hindered from entering it. Whosoever comes He cherishes with food, fetched from the storehouse of His creating word. The elements He stills over their heads and makes a calm. He brings hope

from beyond the dark grave, where she lay shrouded in mortality. Peace He conjures from the troubles of the most guilty breast. The mourner He anoints with the oil of joy. The mourner in sackcloth and ashes He clothes with the garment of praise. And what more can we say?—than that, if the knowledge of death averted from your heads be joy, and the knowledge of offences forgiven be contentment, and the knowledge of God reconciled be peace, and of heaven offered be glory, and of wisdom streaming from its everlasting fountain be light to the understanding, and strength ministered from the arm of the Omnipotent be life to the soul—then, verily, this peace, contentment, honour, and life is yours, Christian believers, through the revelation of Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God.

Thus to be brought into the secret counsels of the Almighty, by familiar teaching of one Himself almighty, is an exaltation of human nature only surpassed by the perfect satisfaction which it yields to her various conditions. To know things as they are to be, and have no perplexities about the future—this is the resolution of a thousand doubts which were wont to afflict the speculation of man. To have that future filled with life and immortality, honour and glory—this is the conquest of all earthly trials and troubles. To know what is best to be done in every predicament from the mouth of God—this is safety. To know, when we have done amiss, where to find forgiveness—this is relief. To know in life's embarrassments where to look for sufficient help—this is assurance. In life's disappointments to know a haven to flee to, and in life's griefs a Comforter to repose on;—to have, in short, the faculties of our minds directed, and the ambiguities of our conduct cleared up, our prayers listened to, and our want supplied—this is unspeakable privilege, and the knowledge which unlocks it, is not only the eternal but the present life of man.

Oh! why do men stop short, contenting themselves with the troublesome part of knowledge, but from this, in which lieth its true delectation, turning themselves away? How many are content to know only the arts of their livelihood, as if the hands were all the faculties of man, and his body all his consignment from God. Ah! what comes of love, and de-

votion, and ambition, and the other faculties of the inward man! and with the hands what can the soul lay up for eternity? Faith must supply her with a busy hand, and the Scriptures with a fertile field whereon to labour, which, being employed, she will speedily treasure up a sufficiency for eternity.

Not less have the prime ministers and chosen favourites of knowledge departed from the fountain of intelligence. Becoming acquainted with some chamber of nature's secrets, they think to find satisfaction there: and a satisfaction they find—the vulgar satisfaction of being honoured, flattered, and perhaps enriched. Equal satisfaction have the most ignorant, who happen to be born affluent or noble; but wisdom's higher satisfaction, consisting in a soul enlightened, and disabused of prejudice and error, and contented with its sphere, it hath not been my lot to find amongst the wise of this world's generation. Their knowledge alters not their hearts, but opening new fields for gratifying temper, gives strength to the evil as often as to the good of human nature, making them more powerful either to good or ill; and hence, according to St. Paul, it puffeth up. But if, instead of resting in the blind adoration of nature, which, being uninspired with soul, cannot benefit their soul with its communions, they would rise to nature's God, and acknowledge Him not only as powerful to create and move the universe, but as condescending to visit and merciful to save His meanest creature, then would their travelling with knowledge bless them, and add no sorrow, but advance them into the fellowship of God's nature and blessedness.

Such are the benefits which accrue to us from the knowledge of the word of God, that nothing derived from any other kind of knowledge can compensate for its absence. Political knowledge carried to excess makes men proud, bitter, and contentious. Poetical knowledge carried to excess disposeth men to be contemptuous of the wise and prosaic ordinances of customary life. Practical knowledge of affairs makes men worldly and artful. Knowledge of the Scriptures is the only wisdom which shall elevate a man's conceptions, while it purifies his principles and sweetens his temper, and makes his

conduct bountiful and kind to all around. No matter what be your condition, you shall find direction how to dignify and adorn it, and make it large enough, for the sanctification of your spirit for heaven.

This brings me to the second benefit of perusing the Scriptures: viz., The life of heavenly enterprise to which they move us in the present world. If a man would arise above the level of a mere slave, obedient to the calls of nature, and the habits and customs of the age and place he lives in, and have some say for himself in the regulation of his conduct when he delivers himself from the slavery of custom and example; if he take not to the word of God for his guide, he shall feel himself distracted among the contending principles and desires of his nature—interest drawing him one way, affection another, and passion hurrying him a third. He shall find how insufficient are his better perceptions and powers—how weak reason is, how unwilling is will, how conscience expires among the uncertainties, and resolution among the difficulties of an upright course. Such will be, at least, the general experience of men who, while they refuse human, lean not to Divine authority, but conduct life by principles of their own choosing. Some there are blessed with such weak passions and strong reason as to steer without foreign help; but though such may be found to succeed, instead of being admired for their noble independence by the crowd who cling to ancient and present customs, they will generally be stigmatised as self-conceited, or persecuted as innovators; so that disturbance from without, if not from within, will invade every one who, shaking loose of religious or customary restraints, adventures for himself.

Yet such adventurers should all men become. What to us are the established rules of life, that they should blindly overrule us? Must we be bound in thraldom to fill, and do no more than fill, the narrow bounds of the condition into which we are born? Is there nought noble, nought heroical, to be undertaken and achieved? Must the budding desires of our youthful nature be held in check by the narrow prescriptions of an age and an authority we despise; and the labour of a life end in nothing but contemptible drudgery, to keep our tabernacle in being? Adventurers above your sphere I would

have you all to become; brave designs, not antiquated customs, should move your life. A path heroical you should trace out, and follow to glory and immortality.

But if you resign the rudder of the world's opinions, and cease to be tame, then unruly shall you become, and more unhappy to yourselves, to the world more vexatious, if you adopt not the better rudder of God's own guidance. Human reason in its fallen state may do much to assist, but is incompetent to guide and overmaster you. Better be slaves, like the world's generations, to the soil, and work out the pitiful emolument of temporal and physical comfort they derive, than set their maxims at defiance, and run a wayward course of your own—ordinarily a course to ruin. Yet, in God's name! set these worldly maxims at defiance, their paltry emoluments despise; and array yourselves under the safe conduct of the word of God; which will lead you, guide you, raise you high above earthly objects, through a noble course of well-doing, to the holy place of the Most High.

There is a spell of custom, the Scriptures call it a dead sleep, in which men are bound. They will not think, they will not feel for themselves; and, which is worse, they will not allow God to think and feel in their behalf. And what comes of this spell-bound slavery? the strong and immortal parts of nature wax weak, the love of good degenerates, and the power of good altogether dies. To renovate nature, to fill her with a divine nature, to make men, whatever their condition, the companions of God, and the members of Jesus Christ—objects of angel visits—the honoured ministers of God upon the earth—kings and priests to God—nothing less than this is the design of the Holy Scriptures, and their fruit to those who obey them. Know them, and upon the knowledge act, and all meanness shall forsake your conduct, with all hypocrisies: and all the struggles of passion with interest, and of interest with duty; and your character shall come forth in the strength and beauty of holiness, to the honour and glory of your Creator.

Then you walk with God, and His favour compasseth you around; you are in the way of His commandments, and the great peace which is in the keeping of them is your portion; you are living by faith on Christ, and the Spirit of Christ is in

you; you are walking in the Spirit, and no condemnation remaineth for you. The sword of the Spirit which is the word of God, putteth your enemies to flight. The indwelling of the Spirit moveth your soul to divine attainments, and the world's hindrances hinder you not from running the race for the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus.

I know nothing able to restrain or limit the perfection of the meanest man who will submit himself to the word of God. Hard labour may wear him down, but as his day is, so shall his strength be. His own evil nature may hold back, but the Spirit is powerful over all carnal affections. Temptations may delude him; God will not suffer him to be tempted above what he can bear. Whatever man has been enabled to reach by divine grace, I see not but man, every man, by the same grace may still attain; therefore adventure, under God's management, to any reach of holy and heavenly life. Put no limitation to your wishes within the bounds of God's promises. Success dependeth not on station, it dependeth not on natural knowledge, it dependeth not on fortunate accidents, all it dependeth on is the craving desire to know, and the assiduous endeavour to attain. God is not loath to do His part, nor the word of God difficult to comprehend. Nought is wanting but the desire to be instructed and furnished to every good word and work.

But if you rather prefer the fortune of the brutes that perish, to look upon the light of the sun, and eat the provision of the day; to vegetate like a plant through the stages of life, and, like a plant, to drop where ye grew, and perish from the memory of earth—having done nothing, desired nothing, and expected nothing beyond: if this you prefer to that immortal destiny which hath been described above, then have you heard what you lose in the present;—hear now what you lose through eternity.

You lose God's presence, in which all creation rejoiceth. You lose God's capacity to bless you with His manifold blessings, which the cherubim and seraphim can speak of better than a fallen man. You lose the peace and perfect blessedness of heaven, which, from this earth, we can hardly catch the vision of. Have you suffered spiritual oppression and drown-

ing among fleshly appetites and earthly objects? freedom from this you lose. Have you groaned under the general bondage of the creature, and called for deliverance? this deliverance you lose. Have you conceived pictures of quiet and peaceful enjoyment amidst beautiful and refreshing scenes? the everlasting realities of these you lose. Have you felt the ravishment of Divine communions when the conscious soul breathes its raptures but cannot utter them? the eternal enjoyment of these you lose. What Adam and Eve enjoyed within the unblemished paradise of Eden with the presence of God—you lose. What Peter and John felt upon the mount of transfiguration, where they would have built tabernacles and remained for ever—you lose. Oh! can you think of this world's fare with contentment? If you are wicked, how do your sins find you out, or overhang you with detection! If you are holy, how your desires outrun your performance, and your knowledge your power; how you fall, are faint, are backsliding, are in darkness, in doubt, in dismay! You are *not* content with this world's fare, you long after something higher and better; hence the perpetual cheering of hope, and instigation of ambition, and thirst after novelty, and restlessness after a better condition. When man cometh to wish, to expect to labour, or care for nothing higher or better than his present condition, he is supremely miserable. God hath left these witnesses within our breasts out of whose mouth to convict us. He will say, "Ye strove after something happier. 'Twas the labour of your life to reach it. I let down heaven's glory to your eager eyes. You put it away; therefore be it put away from your habitation for ever." Oh, ye who labour by toil and trouble to exalt your condition, will ye not exalt it far above the level of thrones or principalities, or any name that is named upon the earth!

Would that, like St John in the Apocalypse, I had seen, or, like Paul in the trance, I had felt the glories of heaven, that for your sakes I might unfold them! I have spoken of the removal of earthly disasters and embarrassments, which cleave to the lot of the religious in one kind, and to the lot of the wicked in another kind. But the removal of these is nothing. I have spoken of the gratification of all nature's hungerings

and thirstings after truth, knowledge, goodness, and happiness. But this is nothing. These distresses, these desires, pertain to a weak and fallen creature. It behoves to speak of the enjoyments and desires of angels—of their fervours, their loves, their communions. But who can speak of them?

Yet if emblems can assist you, then do you join in your imagination the emblems and pictures of heaven. What is the condition of its people? That of crowned kings. What is their enjoyment? That of conquerors triumphant, with palms of victory in their hands. What their haunts? The green pastures by the living waters. What their employment? Losing their spirits in the ecstasies of melody, making music upon their harps to the Lord God Almighty, and to the Lamb for ever and ever. For guidance—the Lamb, that is in the midst of them, shall lead them by rivers of living waters, and wipe away all tears from their eyes. For knowledge—they shall be like unto God, for they shall know even as they are known. For vision and understanding, they shall see face to face, needing no intervention of language or of sign. For ordinances (through which the soul makes imperfect way to her Maker)—there is no temple in the city of their habitation, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple thereof. "There shall be no night there, and they need no candle, neither light of the sun, for the Lord God giveth them light, and they shall reign for ever and ever." Nay, the very sense hath its gratifications in the city of God; the building of the wall is of jasper, the city of pure gold like unto clear glass; the foundation of the wall garnished with all manner of precious stones; every one of the twelve gates a pearl. Now, what means this wealth of imagery drawn from every storehouse of nature, if it be not that the choicest of all which the eye beholds, or the heart is ravished with—that all which makes matter beautiful and the spirit happy—that all which wealth values itself on and beauty delights in, with all the scenery which charms the taste and all the employments which can engage the affections; everything, in short, shall lend its influence to consummate the felicity of the saints in light.

Oh what untried forms of happy being, what cycles of revolving bliss await the just! Conception cannot reach it, nor

experience present materials for the picture of its similitude; and though thus figured out by the choicest emblems, they do no more represent it, than the name of Shepherd describes the watchful guardianship of Christ, or the name of the Father the unspeakable love of Almighty God.

Therefore, let me persuade you to make much of the volume which contains the password to the city of God, and without which it is hid both from knowledge and from search. And if in this volume there be one truth more prizeworthy than another, it is this,—that Christ hath set open the gates of the city, and that He is the way by which it is to be reached. He hath gone before to prepare its mansions for your reception, and He will come again to those who look for His appearing. For His sake be ye reconciled to God, that ye may have a right to the tree of life, and enter by the gate into the city.

Thus, by the combined considerations which have been set before you in successive discourses—by the awfulness of God's presence in His word—by the necessity of listening to it—by the terrific issues of disobeying it—and now by these, the present and eternal gains of obedience—have we pleaded at length for the oracles of God, being convinced, that until they be taken up and perused, and obeyed under the solemn impression of such feelings as have been set forth, they will never have their proper place in the minds of men, but continue, as they are to most, a book purchased but little read; esteemed, but little acted on. It is shameful to men of talents and power that they should allow themselves in such indecision upon the subject of religion, which, by its effects upon the world, is more entitled to preference in their consideration, than science or literature, or policy or arms. It proves the grossness rather than the refinement, the bondage rather than the liberty of their minds, that they should be so engrossed with fame, and wealth, and power, and the other rewards which wait on eminence in any profession, as to have no thoughts to spare upon revelation and futurity, but go to their graves as ignorant and undecided, and uninfluenced in these matters as if they were living in the ages before the birth of

Christ. I have more respect infinitely for one who, having dealt with the subject of the Scriptures, finds a verdict against them, than I have for those who have not soul enough to see in the subject aught worthy of their thoughts, although they take up with the merest novelties in fashion and politics, and arts and science, pluming themselves upon the high walk of human interest which they are choosing. Would they know, would they think, would they come to a conclusion, would they justify their neglect of God's great commandments, by a manifesto of reason, or feeling, or interest, shewing that it is silly, ignoble, or useless, to give heed to the Almighty, then they would acquit themselves like men; but it doth bespeak in them a frivolity of mind and a lightness of heart, of which the age and country may well feel ashamed, that they see no good in that heartfelt, vital godliness which hath written its blessed fruits in every characteristic page of our history, and in almost every article in the charter of English rights. No wonder that venality and factious self-interest should come to play in public affairs such leading parts, and that the names of principle and virtue should be smiled on with sceptical scorn by public men, when thus are cast away the fear of God, and the expectation of heaven—the fulcrum upon which magnanimity and disinterestedness did rest, when in former times they poised up rooted corruption and arbitrary power from their ancient seats, and cast them forth of the land!

This degeneracy of character springs from that heedlessness of the word of God which distinguisheth the education of the influential classes. Would mathematical science thrive if Euclid and the Principia were to cease from the studies of our youth? Would the public watchfulness of the people over their rulers thrive if they were to refrain from perusing the daily intelligence, and conversing of public affairs? Will religion thrive if the word of God be not studied, and its topics conferred on? If at that season, when our youth of first family and ambition are preparing their minds for guiding affairs, by courses of early discipline in public schools, and those of second rank are entered to the various professions of life, if then no pains be taken to draw their attention to the

sacred writings, and impress principles of piety and virtue upon their minds, how can it be expected that religion should ever plant itself in their preoccupied minds, and produce in them the high soul, and public spirit, and private virtue which would make them the guardians of our present welfare, and the examples of a succeeding age? One cannot always be learning: youth is for learning, manhood for acting, and old age for enjoying the fruits of both. I ask, why, when the future lawyer is studying Blackstone or Littleton; the future physician, Hippocrates and Sydenham; the future economist, Smith and Malthus; the future statesman, Locke and Sydney; each that he may prepare for filling a reputable station in the present world—why the future immortal is not at the same time studying the two testaments of God, in order to prepare for the world to come, in which every one of us hath a more valuable stake? If immortality be nothing but the conjuration of priests to cheat the world, then let it pass, and our books go to the wind like the Sibyls' leaves; but if immortality be neither the dream of fond enthusiasts, nor the trick of artful priests, but the revelation of the righteous God, then let us have the literature, and the science, and the practice for the long after-stage of our being, as well as for the present time, which is but its porch. These pleadings are to men who believe immortality, (we may hereafter plead with those otherwise minded;) therefore let them justify their belief, and shew their gratitude by taking thought and pains about the great concerns of that immortality which they believe.

Meanwhile, upon tastes unsanctified by divine influences, and upon minds all undefended from whatever may flatter and please our natural inclinations, there is obtruded by profane wits, and needy speculators, the various forms of literary folly and wickedness, in which everything is consulted for except the interests of truth and righteousness. Now the mind, like the body, if fed on unwholesome foods, decays in its health and strength, and to be greedy after such unwholesome foods proves it to be under disease; and when I look upon the popular literature of this day, I cannot otherwise feel, than that the heart of the nation is in the way of being grossly

corrupted and depraved. This conviction hath been before me throughout the whole of these orations for the divine oracles, which contain the treasures of all truth and nobleness, and can alone counteract the growing mischief. What shoals of literary works circulate through the minds of this people day by day, week by week, month by month, quarter by quarter, eagerly longed for, and as greedily devoured, in which there is not one Christian sentiment for a thousand that are unchristian! Such virulence of party feeling and violence of personal abuse, and cruel anatomy of men's faults and failings, such inventions of wit and humour, to disguise truth and season falsehood, issue forth from the press amongst the people; that if the contrary influences of religion do not counteract the poison and nourish the noble and generous parts of human nature, the ancient character of this nation for truth and sincerity must fall away, and the people come under the influence of those outcasts who write for fame or spite, or hire themselves for pay. I go not out of my way to bring a railing accusation against the circulating literature, but I wish to represent the truth, and demonstrate how all men interested in religion are called upon to labour in behalf of the oracles of God now more than ever, when the oracles of vanity, and calumny, and party rage are so borne abroad upon a thousand wings. The culture which these circulating works give to the faculty of thought is all in our favour, for our religion stands by thought, and hath been always the mother of thought; but the culture given to bad passions and unholy feelings is all against us, creating habits and likings which our religion must reverse in its progress over the mind.

This supremacy and empire of religion, zeal alone will not effect; the character of the age calls for argument and deep feeling and eloquence. You may keep a few devotees together by the hereditary reverence of ecclesiastical canons, and influence of ecclesiastical persons; but the thinking and influential minds must be overcome by shewing, that not only can we meet the adversary in the field by force of argument, but that the spirit of our system is ennobling and consoling to

human nature—necessary to the right enjoyment of life, and conducive to every good and honourable work. Religion is not now to be propagated by rebuking the free scope of thought, and drafting, as it were, every weak creature that will abase his powers of mind before the zeal and unction of a preacher, and by schooling the host of weaklings to keep close and apart from the rest of the world. This both begins wrong and ends wrong. It begins wrong, by converting only a part of the mind to the Lord, and holding the rest in superstitious bonds. It ends wrong, in not sending your man forth to combat in his courses with the unconverted. The reason of both errors being one and the same. Not having thoroughly furnished him to render a reason of the hope that is in him, you dare not trust him in the enemies' camp, lest they should bring him over again, or laugh at him for cleaving to a side which he cannot thoroughly defend.

I mean not in this, and the many other allusions which I have made to the degeneracy of our times, to argue that every Christian should be trained in schools of learning or human wisdom, but that the spirit of our procedure in making and keeping proselytes should be enlightened and liberal, and the character of our preaching strong and manly, as well as sound. That we should rejoice in the illumination of the age, and the cultivation of the public mind, as giving us a higher tribunal than hath perhaps ever existed, before which to plead the oracles of God—before which to come in all the strength and loveliness of our cause, asking a verdict, not from their toleration of us its advocates, but upon their conscience, and from the demonstration of its truth. In such a manner I have endeavoured to conduct the discourse, which I now bring to a close. Whether it may gain the conviction of those to whom it is addressed, I leave in the hands of God, who giveth the increase, possessing within myself the satisfaction of having designed and endeavoured the best; adding to all, this my solemn conviction: that until advocates of religion do arise to make unhallowed poets, and undevout dealers in science, and intemperate advocates of policy, and all other pleaders before the public mind, give place, and know the inferiority of

their various provinces to this of ours—till this most fatal error, that our subject is second-rate, be dissipated by a first-rate advocation of it—till we can shift these others into the back-ground of the great theatre of thought, by clear superiority in the treatment of our subject, we shall never see the men of understanding in this nation brought back to the fountains of living water, from which their fathers drew the life of all their greatness.

Many may think it an unchristian thing to reason thus violently, and many may think it altogether unintelligible; and to myself it would appear unseemly, did I not reassure myself by looking around. They are ruling and they are ruled, but God's oracles rule them not. They are studying every record of antiquity in their seats of learning, but the record of God, and of Him whom He hath sent, is almost unheeded. They enjoy every communion of society, of pleasure, of enterprise, this world affords; but little communion with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. They carry on commerce with all lands, the bustle and noise of their traffic fill the whole earth; they go to and fro, and knowledge is increased,—but how few in the hasting crowd are hasting after the kingdom of God! Meanwhile, death sweepeth on with his chilling blast, freezing up the life of generations, catching their spirits unblessed with any preparation of peace, quenching hope, and binding destiny for evermore. Their graves are dressed, and their tombs are adorned;—but their spirits, where are they? How oft hath this city, where I now write these lamentations over a thoughtless age, been filled and emptied of her people since first she reared her imperial head! How many generations of her revellers have gone to another kind of revelry; how many generations of her gay courtiers to a royal residence where courtier-arts are not; how many generations of her toilsome tradesmen to the place of silence, whither no gain can follow them! How time hath swept over her, age after age, with its consuming wave, swallowing every living thing, and bearing it away unto the shores of eternity! The sight and thought of all which is my assurance that I have not, in the heat of my feelings, surpassed the merit of

the case. The theme is fitter for an indignant prophet, than an uninspired sinful man.

But the increase is of the Lord. May He honour these thoughts to find a welcome in every breast which weighs them—may He carry these warnings to the conscience of every one whose eye peruseth them. And may His word come forth to guide the proceedings of men, that they may dwell together in love and unity, and come at length to the everlasting habitation of His holiness.

THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER.

INTRODUCTORY.

HOW IT IS POSSIBLE TO TEACH SPIRITUAL THINGS BY NATURAL EMBLEMS.

IT is often placed to the account of the Lord's exquisite taste, large knowledge, and fine feeling of natural fitness and beauty, that from the commonest occasions, and humblest occupations of life—as the sower, the shepherd, the vine-dresser, &c.—he should have been able to draw the sublimest lessons and doctrines of religion; but when the niceness of taste, and the skill of execution, and the wise adaptation of the moral, have been all observed, commented upon, and admitted to the utmost, (and it is impossible to pass the bounds of truth in the admiration and commendation thereof), the mystery remains as before, and has never been touched by the elegant observations and exact criticisms of our lettered and cultivated discoursers. The mystery lieth in this, how it should be possible to represent things which are invisible by means of things which are visible; things which are spiritual by things which are sensual; things which are pure and perfect as the will of God, by things which are to the very heart impregnated with, and to the brim full of, impurity, imperfection, and wretchedness? How come these analogies to exist between the realities of a fallen world, and the ideas, promises, first rudiments, and beginnings of a world unfallen? Are they accidental? or are they designed in the purpose of God? Is it a work of ingenuity or of piety to search them out? Is it a proof of subtlety or of wisdom to have discovered them? And is it of the artificial decorations of eloquence, or of the essence of instructive discourse, to employ them when they have been found out? These are questions

which, though simple as to the occasion which suggesteth them, are yet as deep as they are important, and, being well sifted, will afford the true resolution of the main difficulty which we have always felt in the exposition of this parable,—what is this soil of a good and honest heart, in which the word of God both takes root, bears the heat of the sun, and brings forth abundant fruit, to the enriching of the sower and the blessedness of the earth? Let us give good heed, then, to this subject; and the Lord himself open it to the meditations of His people.

Certainly it is not accidental, that the natural world should bear such wonderful analogies with, and afford so many emblems or similitudes for expressing, the spiritual world: for that we call accidental which happens but seldom and unexpectedly: that which exhibits itself regularly, according to a law or order of its own, we call of purpose and design. Now, the case before us is really such, that the natural world is used in divine revelation, not in one part, but in all its parts, as if it were the proper types for making the things which are not seen intelligible. For example, in the relationships of man with man,—that of husband and wife expresseth the mystery of Christ and His elect Church; that of father and son, the mystery of the relation between the First and Second Persons of the Godhead; that of king and people, the mystery of Christ's relation to the world in this present age, and to the Church in the age which is to come; that of a man to his adopted son, is the mystery of the Father and the Elect; &c. Again, of the body, the various constitutional parts are in like manner consecrated to spiritual ends,—our birth, without any power of our own, expresseth the mystery of our regeneration by the Holy Spirit; and the circumambient element of air, upon which our life is supported, without any power in us to control its free coming or going, shadoweth forth the nourishment of the whole Church by the Spirit: the harmonious and fitly framed body, being one made up by the sympathy and sweet coalescence of diversely-endowed members, is the emblem of the one catholic Church and communion of saints, the body of Christ, and the temple of the Holy Ghost. And if we descend

to the vegetable creation,—the sowing of the seed is the preaching of the gospel; the reaping of the harvest is the ingathering of the saints; and the threshing and fanning of the wheat, is the judgments and commotions by which Christ shall utterly purge the earth of all His enemies: the vineyard is the Church, the stem of the vine is Christ, the branches are His disciples, and the keeper of the vineyard is the Father: the good grapes are the righteous, the sour grapes are the reprobate; and because these alone are left when the elect have all been gathered, the vintage is the destruction of all the apostates in the winepress of the wrath of Almighty God. Or if we look to the elemental world,—we have the light representing Christ, the wind representing the Holy Ghost; but the Father, being essentially invisible, hath no other emblem than as the Father of lights, "in whom there is no variableness nor shadow of turning:" the earth is the stable government and constitution of society; and the yeasty sea is the restless tossings and agitations of the spirit of discord in the out-field of the barbarous nations.

For, it is further to be remarked, that this use of things natural, to represent things spiritual, is not the culling out of the best and noblest, but likewise and equally the use of the worst and basest, or rather, I should say, the indiscriminate use of all. Sickness and vileness, wounds, bruises, and putrefying sores, leprosy, palsy, and death, are all used to shadow forth the evil conditions of our natural estate; medicines, balms, and amputations, Christ's medical care of us; and health, or salvation, which is restoring to health, represents the efficacy of the Physician's care. Rebellion, and judgment, and imprisonment, and execution, and war, are constantly used as the symbols of spiritual things: so are adultery, fornication, divorce, and, I may say, every form of faithlessness. Natural life is altogether, by the Holy Spirit, made to be but one allegory of spiritual things: all the substantial attributes, or constant laws of life, are, to use a vulgar but very expressive similitude, the fount of types with which the book of inspiration is printed, in order to be made legible and intelligible to the whole human family.

And the question is, How cometh this to pass? The common resolution of the difficulty is, that the present aspect of the fallen creation is a rude representation of what it was in its original beauty; and doth, like a crumbling ruin, afford some faint and imperfect notion of its ancient magnificence. This observation, in itself, I believe to be true; but as a solution of the difficulty before us, it is inadequate and incomplete, and its incompleteness hath given rise to a great deal of error. For, in the first place, though it well expresseth the great obscuration and deterioration of all things, it does not meet the difficulty of explaining why the ruinous creation was just left at that state of ruin in which it might serve to commemorate its primitive perfection. Why stands it, like Tadmor and Palmyra, a monument of former grandeur; and not rather, like Nineveh or Babylon, which tell no tales of their former glory? Besides, it is a false similitude that fallen nature is like a ruin in its fall; seeing it is not crumbling, nor unstable, nor covered over with the dust of ages, but a fabric firm and orderly, fresh and beautiful, standing to its ancient constitutions, and fulfilling the intentions of its Creator. There is a mighty power, there is an infinite variety, there is an unspeakable grace in all its operations and productions; insomuch, that it is ever stealing away the worship and the adoration of men; and hath so charmed the minds of this scientific and tasteful generation, that by thousands, and tens of thousands, they are leaving the worship of Christ for the worship of nature. And, though doubt there can be none, that in all its parts nature is underlying the sore and grievous curse which was pronounced upon it after the fall, and hath shared the bitter portion of its master; yet is it not a decayed and decaying ruin, but a firm and enduring structure, constituted under strong and sure laws, which preserve themselves unbroken until this day. So that the question still remaineth, How is it that this sinful and anger-stricken work of God should contain in it the similitude of that perfect condition in which we at present believe, and hope hereafter to be possessed of? Moreover, to say that nature in its fallen state carries a certain resemblance to the unfallen creation, which God pro-

nounced very good, is a mere hypothesis at the best; for we have no such records of the unfallen creation as to enable us to compare them together; and if the hypothesis could be assured, it has nothing to do with the difficulty before us, which is not how nature should be like the first creation, but how it should shadow forth the regeneration, that perfect condition of things yet to be, at present believed on, and hereafter to be manifested, which we call spiritual and eternal. But, worse than all, it is a line of argument, or rather of speculation, which hath led into very great mischief those divines who have adopted it; giving rise to a notion of the revealed law, as if it were only a republication of the law of creation, and had respect to the first Adam, shewing us what he was; not to the second Adam, shewing us what he was to be. From which doating and dreaming about the revealed law as the picture of man's primitive condition, hath come the false and heretical notion, that if you make a good use of it you may set human nature upon its feet again; as if we had power in ourselves to regenerate ourselves, and wanted only a model to do the work by, which model God had kindly afforded us in the revealed law. To all such idlers I would say, "Go, try your hand at rectification upon some of the lower parts of the fallen universe: instruct the elements, for example, that they should do no harm; the animals, that they should not kill each other; the body of man, that it should not die: and when you have succeeded there, I will give you higher work, and advance you to set right the mainspring and master-movement of the whole, which is the will or spirit of man."

Every account of the matter drawn from the retrospection of the first estate of man rejecting, therefore, as crude and insufficient, which hath neither sound principle nor profitable end, I proceed to render what I conceive to be the only true resolution of the question: which is simply the statement of a doctrine,—that I believe God hath ordained nature in its present form, and established it according to its present laws, for the single and express purpose of shadowing forth that future perfect condition into which it is to be brought: so that from man down to the lowest creature, and from the animated

creation down to the lowest plant, and from the vegetable creation throughout the elemental and inorganic world, everything containeth the presentiment of its own future perfection; hath been so constituted of God as to be prophetic thereof; and is bearing a silent witness to the redemption and restitution of all things which is yet to be; is in a state of travail and great sorrow, groaning and wailing till it be delivered of its immortal birth, in the day of the manifestation of the sons of God. And herein lies the proper meaning of the word "nature," (*natura*, "about to be born,") that it is about to bring forth: not that it is anything, but that it is to become by bearing something. To open this clearly and fully is what I now aim to do; for which end it will be necessary to go back to the beginning, and discourse a little of the Fall.

The Lord, foreseeing and providing against the fall of man, and being thereby about to realise the great birth and manifestation of Himself for ever, constituted Adam the type or "figure," but certainly not the reality of "Him that was to come" (Rom. v.): who was perfect in beauty, and completely accomplished in knowledge for his high place and vocation, not only as the regent of the lower world, but as the image of God, and after the likeness in which God should appear. In order, moreover, to shew how utterly impossible it is for any creature to stand when left to itself, Adam was without the knowledge of evil: not only with no bias to it, but without the knowledge of what it was; therefore, without any temptation to it, or solicitation of any kind. He had nothing to desire, nothing to gain; there was provision for all his wants, and satisfaction for all his desires: and no creature could be more beneficently created, or better conditioned for standing in the favour of God; because it was the great experiment, and the great demonstration, to shew whether any creature in its creation-form can stand; or whether there be not an absolute necessity that it should fall, unless otherwise sustained. And what is that *otherwise?* By connexion with the Son of God, in the fulness of whose bosom the creation stood from all eternity conceived and contemplated by the Father: whence, when it has come forth from this the womb of its conception, and been born, by the work of the Spirit, into an outward

existence of its own, there is no other way, by which it doth remain connected with the Son, save by faith and hope of the Son's own manifestation in the fulness of the times. For I believe that the manifestation of any of the realities in the bosom of the Son is the promise of the manifestation of the Son himself, for whom all things are, and were created. Now, every creature which came forth of the Son had, no doubt, the promise of the manifestation of the Christ; and herein consisted its fealty and faithfulness unto creation's Lord, in holding forth the faithful witness of Him that was to come. This faith and hope is the only ground by which a creature could stand, and which Adam should have manifested in a perfect obedience; and then he would have been indeed the perfect type of Christ, for which especial end he was created. And as it was the last experiment and demonstration of every creature's instability, so was it made the most decisive one. Here is a creature possessing the whole form of the Christ; a full and perfect image of what the invisible God should be when He shall become visible. He hath it not in a word or a promise; He hath it in the very constitution and framework of His being, and in the homage of everything around Him. "He sealed up the sum, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty." Yet must there be some test of obedience, something whereby his fealty shall be proved; otherwise he were God, and not a creature: some service, in token of his being an inferior; some feudal tenure, be it but a barley-corn, whereby to manifest that the fee-simple was in another: which verily was made the least possible, consisting simply in His abstaining from one tree amongst the thousands with which the paradise of Eden abounded. This little thing He had to render unto creation's Lord; this only shewed that he was inferior unto God, in that province over which he had received the supremacy. And, in order to make him still more abhorrent of the act of disobedience, it was declared unto him, that "in the day he ate thereof he should surely die." But with all these advantages of his condition, which, without any offence to Divine power, we may say were the greatest possible, he also did soon reveal the infirmity and inferiority of every creature; he fell into transgression, subverted the end of his creation, defrauded the

Christ of his faithful testimony, and threw off subjection to his Maker: and so the end of his creation, and of the creation of all things here below, was subverted. Therefore, they must die, because they no longer declared the truth; they must utterly perish, because now they bear testimony to a lie; or, if they remain, they must be constituted for some end of witnessing to the truth, which, in the first instance, they have denied and frustrated. And that they remained and died not, is the proof that God's purpose had not been defrauded altogether, yea, not defrauded at all; that, in fact, he had a far deeper purpose than shewed itself at the first—which was, to permit the sin and to overrule the fall, to the destruction and extermination of sin: so as that His Son, in becoming manifest, might, as the blessed conjunction and high prerogative of that happy hour of His most blessed nativity, bring along with Him the destruction and utter detrusion of sin from the abode of the saints of God. But, this purpose requiring time to develop itself, it was necessary, in the meanwhile, so to overrule and restrain the wickedness which had been introduced, and would soon have brought about the death of all things, as that it should be not only a testimony of sin present, but also a testimony of sin about to be cast out; not only the testimony of a fall, but also the testimony of a restoration; not only the testimony of a death from a life that once was good, but also the testimony of a resurrection to a life that should be much better. And, accordingly, this was done, because it was possible to be done, through the sacrifice of that Lamb of God which was slain before the foundation of the world. And what rendered it possible? This only rendered it possible—namely, that in the councils of eternity the purpose was to bring in the Christ through the avenues of sin and through the jaws of death. Which being an integral and substantial part of the purpose of the Godhead, for the revelation of their own being, and for the blessedness of all elect creatures, who by faith and hope in the great expectation had stood fast, maketh everything connected with the introduction of sin to be not only profitable, but prolific of all good; maketh the apparent changes of the Divine operations to be only the harmonious unfoldings of

one mighty plan—which is, to bring in the Christ through the avenues of sin and the jaws of death; and to establish all things by the method not of first creation, but of restitution, which I believe to be the only way capable of making known the manifold wisdom and perfections of God.

We are, therefore, devoutly to regard the world which we inhabit, ourselves who inhabit it, and every thing that hath a being therein, as having been preserved from death, placed in their present posture, and constituted according to their present laws, because of the merit of that sacrifice which was offered up from the day of eternity; and being *by* Christ preserved, then also *for* Christ preserved,—for the end of lifting up, in the midst of the apostasy of the creature which now must run its course, a faithful witness in behalf of Him who was yet to come and be the righteous standing and stability of all the things which sin had laid waste, and over which ruin had for a while driven its fatal ploughshare.

For no one can doubt that the world is under a different constitution than it was in paradise; and this constitution is not the threatened one of death: what, then, is it? There is no room for a third, unless it hold of the redemption of Christ. As man in the midst of the curse had the promise of redemption, so the creatures in the midst of the curse had also their promise of redemption; and they are waiting on, no less than we, for the manifestation of the Redeemer in the likeness of the unfallen, as He hath been already manifested in the likeness of the fallen Adam; to come as the heir of the dominion and power and glory, as he heretofore came the heir of the servitude and the weakness and the curse. The creatures must have been arrested in their road to death, and placed as they have been found since the fall, for some reason. God would not for nothing contravene his threatened word of death: "He is not a man, that he should lie; nor the son of man, that he should repent." Well, then, and for what was it? It could not be for an idle monument of what they once were, unless they were to return to that good condition again; for that were but to sicken reflective minds with profitless despondency, and to drive ambitious minds into madness. And yet,

if this world is to be destroyed and annihilated from the things that be—as the most part of men conceit—what is it that it declareth, but an idle memorial of things that once were, and are no more to be for ever? I wonder whither the good sense of those men is gone, and their prudence, in which they pride themselves, who hold on and keep by such a distracted and disjointed system. What do the heavens preach, what doth the sun go forth from his chambers to declare, what doth the providence of God over all things intend, if it be not the keeping of things together, and the restraining of their downward tendency to ruin and death, in virtue of that redemption which was purposed in eternity, and is bringing about in time; in purchase of which redemption Christ took a body, and died upon the cross; in pledge and assurance of which he arose from the dead, and is seated on the right hand of power, expecting till the times of the Father be fulfilled, and all His enemies be made His footstool?

From these premises I conclude, that all the appointed laws and ordinances of God, whereby the earth is appointed to yield her fruits into the lap of man—the hardy tillage of the ground, the hopeful sowing of the seed, the long waiting-for of harvest, the unavoidable mixture of the tares and wheat, their careful separation in the time of harvest, the storing of the one in precious garners, and the consuming of the other with fire—will all be found to prefigure the beginning and the progress and the consummation of that more excellent husbandry, which the Lord is carrying forward over the face of all the fallen creation, and which is to end in the plentiful and joyful harvest of the Lord's coming. For why? Are they not also a part of the redemption from death, which, being one in beginning and one in end, must be one in demonstration? From the same premises I would infer, that all which is found convenient and necessary for reclaiming man from the lowest condition of savage wretchedness, tending to moral death, and preserving him in peaceful and harmonious societies, tending upwards to moral life—such as criminal laws, punishments, and judgment-seats, the royal fountain of mercy, meritorious preferments of rank and honour, and the inviolate sacredness of domestic rights; the whole ordinance

of king and subject, nobles and people, judges and magistrates, crimes and punishments, whereby men are reclaimed and redeemed from that wretchedness in which they are found in the state of nature—will all be found to shadow forth that divine government which God exerciseth over His church; and by which He preserveth the peace and prosperity of Zion. And this same observation I would extend to every ordinance of God by which the health and well-being of the creatures are preserved: for they are only parts of that great work of redemption which was procured by the death of Christ; and to what else then should they tend, but to declare and foreshew the work of redemption, which by His death was completed as to the purchase and the pledge; which by His resurrection was begun as to the operation of the Spirit?—for I reckon that not the conception of the fleshly body, but the resurrection of the glorious body of Christ, was the beginning of the redemption of the world. This idea of the natural world, as being merely the promise of a birth, we must leave to be opened up at large when the Lord may give us opportunity; it forms the basis of what is called "natural religion;" which is not, as they define it, to discover a religion distinct from Christianity or revelation, but to shew that nature, or rather the culture of nature's barrenness and the promotion of her well-being, is really a lower revelation, a preparation for what hath been brought to light by Christ; so that, as Paul saith, "the invisible things of God from the beginning of the world are clearly seen, even His eternal power and Godhead." This idea also contains the link between all natural sciences and the revelation of our redemption; making nature the handmaiden of grace, and everything venerable in society to serve for the outward court of the Christian temple.

But, without going further into the demonstration of this doctrine, it is easy to discern, from what hath been said, how it should be possible to express the things of the spiritual world, or the world to come, by means of the laws and ordinances of the world that is seen; for the one is, as it were, but a part of the other, or rather, the same revealed in a lower degree, and upon a smaller scale. It is the same work of Christ which it manifests, though only in a state preparatory for the great

work of salvation. I regard all the ordinances of human life, by which the living creatures preserve themselves from immediate death; but especially all the ordinances of God whereby human life is preserved and the generations of mankind continued—our proceeding from the loins of a father, and being carried in a mother's womb, and suckled at her breast; the helps of our childhood from pastors and teachers, until we arrive at the maturity of our strength; the laws by which we prosper in our affairs, and the warlike attitude of defence on which we are forced ever to stand against surrounding enemies; especially the medicinal helps against sickness, and, above all, the provisions against premature death,—all these, the laws of human life and well-being, I regard only as so many removes from death inwards into the realm of life, and so far forth a redemption from the primeval threatening of God: all flowing from no other fountain than the well-spring of the Redeemer's righteousness. They are a partial redemption from death, being the institutions of God for proroguing the penalty pronounced upon the first transgression: and whence can they come but from the merits of the Lord? And coming thence, for what end should they come but to prepare the way, and shadow forth the manner of that great work which he came to fulfil? They are a twilight, in which are seen adumbrations of the true things, of the very same things which shall yet appear to us in clear and open day.

You may depend upon it, therefore, that the laws of all life, vegetable, animal, mental (soulal), and spiritual, are one and the same, though different in degree; and all derived from one and the same sacrifice of our blessed Lord and Saviour, offered from all eternity; without which there would have been no life, but an universal death. And you may rest assured also, that the lower is always typical of the higher; and that the knowledge of the higher is best ascended into through the progression of the lower. We ought not to wonder, therefore, that the Holy Spirit continually useth the emblems or symbols derived from vegetable and human life—the sowing of the seed and the harvest, the birth of the child and the full-grown man—to set forth spiritual things withal. And you ought not to say, they are finely chosen similitudes, but,

they are rightly appropriated types. And, however much our men of taste and sentiment do laugh at the spiritualisings of our fathers, I dare to believe and to say, that to spiritualise nature is rightly to interpret nature; and that the greater part of our Lord's discourses are nothing but divine exercises of this kind; and so of His parables also.

With respect to the Parable of the Sower, therefore, to the study of which these observations are intended to open the way, I observe, that the niggard earth, cursed in consequence of man's transgression—"Cursed is the earth for thy sake"—is not, as it were, another thing from man in the curse; but, both in the cursed and the blessed state, is a part of the appendages of man, made for the possession and comfort of his body, and now reduced to be the penance and burden of his body; yet not separated from him, but bound unto him by stable and unrelenting ordinances of the Creator. In his fall it fell, and in his rise it will rise again; and if in his fall it fell, and in his rise it is to rise again into glory, then, certainly, in this intermediate state of being it is connected as closely with our present intermediate state of grace, and as respondent to the conditions of man, as it was heretofore, or shall be hereafter. Well, then, I believe that this Parable of the Sower, taken, not from an accidental, but from the substantial property of the earth, which is, to nourish human life, doth, not by accidental similitude or resemblance, but by real propriety, represent the husbandry according to which the Father, the great Husbandman, doth proceed in tilling the field of this fallen world, and bringing forth a harvest from the barren and accursed substance of the human soul. "The field is the world"—not, is like the world—"the sower is the Son of man, and the reapers are the angels: the wheat are the children of the kingdom, and the tares are the children of the evil one;" and so on throughout;—not a mere accidental resemblance, which the ingenuity of our Lord discovered, and His good taste and fine feeling of propriety accommodated; but a true emblem or symbol, which His all-comprehensive wisdom knew, yea, and in creation appointed; and which His all-interpreting word explained, as it had originally constituted it. For it was the same Christ who pronounced the curse

upon our first parents, and upon the ground for their sakes, that now comes to pour out in these parables the remedy of redemption which there is for all things, from the ground upwards to the soul of man.

Therefore, the niggard and barren earth, which beareth only thorns and briers, and most noxious weeds, and wild encumbrances of the liberty, and offences to the order and taste of man, who was constituted its lord, is to us not an accidental resemblance, but an actually constituted symbol of the soul of man, which produceth under the curse only the fruits of unrighteousness, the grapes of Sodom, and the clusters of Gomorrah. It is not like a white sheet of paper, as some metaphysicians have dreamed, but it is like the cursed earth, which of its own accord and in itself produceth briers, and thorns, and thickets, where the wild and savage passions, like the wild beasts, do find their coverts and their dens. If you would have the true idea of the natural man, look upon the thickets and sunderbunds of Asia, or on the wide grassy plains and pampas of South America, or on the impenetrable forests of North America, wherein the wild Indian roams, or the backwoodsman plies his long and weary toil. As these disgust the finest tastes, and offend the most orderly feelings of man; as they disappoint the desires and expectations of the careful husbandman, who expects every corner of every field to be producing some wholesome nourishment for man and beast; so doth it offend God, yea, in an infinitely higher degree doth it offend him, to look upon man's natural estate, producing only the fruits of unrighteousness, and yielding none of the frankincense and myrrh, and finest wheat, and purest grapes, for which it was originally planted of the Lord. "I planted thee wholly a good vine, and a right seed; but thou hast brought forth unto me only the grapes of Sodom and the clusters of Gomorrah." Into which rugged waste and overgrown thicket comes the Son of man, our great sower, to sow seed; yet not until He hath prepared it for a long time by the labours of the prophets which went before Him. "The voice of Him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God Every valley shall be exalted and every moun-

tain and hill shall be made low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain." And of His seed a part falleth by the wayside—that is, upon the exposed and common parts, where the traffic of the world proceeds; but the birds of the air, or the emissaries of Satan, who are ever busy trafficking there, pluck it up: another part falleth upon a thin soil; and the sun, which is ordained for its nourishment, doth turn to its destruction, and scorch it up: another part falleth amongst thorns, and is choked by their springing up along with it: and a fourth part falls upon good soil, which alone bringeth forth fruit unto perfection. This assureth me that there are in the field of human nature, upon which the seed of the gospel is sown, these four kinds,—one kind obnoxious to the invasion of Satan; a second kind unable to bear the sun, which should bless it; a third kind, rank and overgrown with weeds, and thorns, and other incumbrances; and a fourth kind, good soil, fit to bring forth, and which hath in all ages brought forth the fruit of the kingdom.

Thus much have we to say upon the general principle of teaching by parables or emblems: and now, with respect to the reason which moved our Lord to use it so much more frequently than the other teachers sent from God, we have to observe that this very parable of the sower, though essentially meant for teaching to His disciples, and especially to His apostles, the true doctrine concerning the preaching of the gospel, containeth also, in the 10th verse, the reason why our Lord used so much the method of parables, which we do not find any of His apostles to have employed. This reason we find given at greater length in the corresponding passage of Matthew: "He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given," (Matt. xiii. 11.) It is also written to the same effect in the Gospel by Mark, (chap. iv. 11, 12.) From which united testimonies we may surely gather, that it was not by choice, nor for the better expression of His doctrines, that our Lord used this method of discourse, but in judgment upon those who had been of old sentenced to deafness and blindness, "Lest they should understand and I

should heal them;" and likewise in accommodation to the stupidity and carnality of the mind of those disciples to whom He spoke: not as I have oft heard our rhetorical and tasteful interpreters of Scripture declaim, out of accommodation to the Eastern style of speech, or to prove what a master He was in the allegorical, as well as the plain method of discourse; but because the people could not understand the plain and simple truth, and were too hardened to receive it if they had understood it. Because they had suffered themselves to abide amongst the sensible forms of the ceremonial law, and would not be led forth into that antechamber of the gospel, which the Lord had prepared in the Psalms and the prophets, they did bring upon themselves this punishment, that they should be spoken to in parables, instead of being spoken to plainly.

For you are to understand, it is no part of the Divine essence or wisdom to cover Himself with clouds and darkness; seeing God is light, and with Him is no darkness at all. These clouds are in our vision, the dimness of our sight, the veils of sin, the darkening scales of vice; but not in Him who dwelleth in light that is unapproachable and full of glory. And the end of all revelation—wherefore it is called revelation—is to remove the blindness from our eyes, that we may see; and to unstop the deafness of our ears, that we may hear; to destroy the carnality of our mind, that we may understand; and to awake the sensibility of our spirit, that we may hold communion with the Father of spirits, and live. This, I say, is the very end of revelation,—to make all things naked and open which by nature are dark and mysterious, and to deliver the soul out of all captivities of sense and worldliness, of error and ignorance, into the enjoyment of Divine liberty and light. Accordingly, we find that the Lord began the dispensation to the patriarchs by simple means, manifesting Himself to their eye in His glory, or conversing with them by simple language in dreams, walking with them and talking with them, and making them to know His good and gracious purposes in a clear and manifest manner. Nor was it until the children of Israel had grown besotted in their spirits by the idolatries and sensualities of Egypt, that He covered His truth with a ceremonial attire, and wrote His law outwardly and fearfully

in tables of stone, and governed His people by a miraculous providence: which was all an accommodation to the infirmity of their faith, and done in great mercy to their unworthiness of a higher revelation. Therefore it is written, that "the law was added because of transgression." I say not but that, like all the works of God, it was perfect in its kind, and is of great value even to us—who, alas! have too much need of the same beggarly elements to help us to the understanding of our spiritual dispensation;—but it was only a temporary expedient, to keep the Church in life during the ages of violence, barbarity, and idolatry, which were to come upon all the earth. And the Lord continually raised up prophets, to lead the truth forth from the prison-house which He had been fain to construct around it: and if the people would have heard the prophets, whom they continually rejected, and commonly put to death, doubt there can be none that Jesus would have come without any parable, to speak plainly unto the people, and open the gate without violence to admit the Gentiles into the inward court of the temple. But the people, giving ear to the sense rather than to the spirit—even as we Gentiles also have done—did take up with the formality rather than enter into the spirituality of the former dispensation, and could receive no communication from the wisdom of Christ unless it also should take a form: wherefore, the pure wisdom had to take the forms of sight, and embody itself in these parables; which are the last efforts of the Spirit of Prophecy to teach that sensual, formal people, who continue till this day in the same sensuality and formality to which the Lord was forced to abandon them.

The particular parable to which our attention is called, was spoken to a great multitude, which had gathered to Him out of all the cities in which He had been preaching separately, accompanied by His twelve apostles, and maintained the while at the charges of certain pious women mentioned in the context. This multitude, which had been gathered together by the power of His preaching, He undertaketh to instruct in the proper power of preaching, and to set them on their guard against the various means by which the evil one would seek to destroy its efficacy upon their souls. For, no doubt, like

all first disciples, they would be ready enough to hang upon their teacher, as if He could lead them into all truth; which is not otherwise to be done but by the power of the Holy Ghost working in every one a fervent application of His own mind, and diligent keeping of His own soul. That He might turn their souls inward upon themselves, and accustom them to spiritual watchfulness, in the exercise of which the work of the Holy Spirit to convince, convert, instruct, and build up, doth proceed, He took the similitude of the sower; knowing well that many of them would not understand it. But why, then, do you ask, take any similitude at all? why tempt the people with a vessel full of meat, but unto which they could have no admission? I answer, The interpretation would have been more dark than the parable. To us, who are accustomed to abstract and spiritual forms of speech, this seemeth strange and unintelligible; but, in order to understand it, you have only to go to an ignorant, sensual day-labourer, such as there are thousands in this city and in the country round about, and try him with some abstract and simple form of truth; and you shall find how helpless he is to this kind of discourse, and what a grateful thing it is to him, what a relief to his labouring brain, to have it set forth by some similitude or parable derived from his profession. And yet the most unintellectual of our peasantry is a spiritual man, compared with the superstitious disciples of a ceremonial and formal religion like the Jewish; as you may see every day, by looking upon the glaring idolatry of our Catholic population, which fills the mind of the most illiterate Protestant of our communion with ridicule and contempt. But to know how much more so it is in Eastern countries, you may ask the missionaries, who find this to be their greatest obstacle,—that the people have no words appropriated to spiritual and moral uses; which is a proof that they have no spiritual or moral ideas; or, in other words, that the carnal man is embodied in their language, and that the spiritual man, when quickened, hath yet a language to appropriate for himself. To us, indeed, perusing the gospel, the parables speak as distinctly as the explanations; nay, are admired as a well-contrived and elegant casket for containing the precious jewel of spiritual truth: but let us

beware how we transfer our condition of a spiritual church to their condition of a formal church: otherwise we shall make sad havoc of the sacred text, and lose the true beauty and appropriateness, yea, and the kind accommodation of these parables.

Our Lord took His image from the agricultural occupations of the townsmen and villagers who surrounded Him, choosing a form of truth which should be universal as the substance of truth which it was to contain, and which should never cease to be understood, and to be invested with a certain dignity, so long as His Gospel should be preached: for the culture of the earth ever hath, and ever will, keep pace with the cultivation of the soul by the word of God; and when this hath become universal, that also will be universal, and the "wilderness and solitary place shall become glad, and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom like the rose." He had oft made use of the same similitude, by the mouth of His servants the prophets, to the former church; and in Isaiah the similitude was formally explained in these words: "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow, from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." And, doubtless in allusion to the gospel ministry, it is written in the Psalms: "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless return again rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." And with the same reference to Divine instruction by the mouth of His servants, it is said in another place, "Cast thy bread upon the waters," (in allusion to the sowing of Egypt while the waters of the Nile were subsiding,) "and thou shalt receive it many days hence." And with a benediction it is said, in Isaiah, "Blessed are they who sow beside all waters." This emblem, which, in a shapeless and indeterminate form lay floating up and down the Old Testament, it was proper for the great Creator of spiritual as well as of natural forms to fashion into a beautiful parable, which should embody the doctrine of

the preaching and the hearing of the gospel, and preserve it in His church for ever.

"A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trodden down, and fowls of the air devoured it." In Persia and other Eastern countries, as, indeed, with us also, the flights of birds are so numerous, that during the time of sowing men are appointed on purpose to watch that they settle not on the field; so that whatever falls on the wayside is sure either to be trodden down, or to become the prey of the fowls of the air, who in the hungry spring have no other forage-ground. And "some fell upon a rock"—or, as St Matthew hath it, "upon stony places"—"where it had not much earth; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture." In which words there is contained an important fact in the philosophy of natural history,—that the moisture is the only nourishment of the plant, the earth being but the bed for retaining the water, and conveying it to the roots of the plant; which, with all its beautiful furniture of root, stem, branches, and leaves, is but, as it were, a Divine contrivance for converting water into fruits convenient for the nourishment of man and beast: and our bodies, as I am given to understand by physiologists, is but another Divine contrivance for converting the water contained in our food into flesh, and blood, and bones, and nerves, and whatever else is proper to animal life; the forms, tastes, flavours, and other qualities of our food, being but its various ornaments from the hand of God, designed to please, and refresh, and exhilarate us in the passage of simple moisture into simple moisture, to which all things must return back again ere they can nourish either the vegetable or the animal life. "And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked it. And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundredfold;" which is no unusual return for the good soils of Palestine and other Eastern countries.

Such is the simple form, in which is contained the most precious and profound truth. But though the spiritual truth seems to us radiant through the form of sense, and to be rather more beautifully and shrewdly signified by the quaint

device under which it is offered to us, these Jews—no, not even the disciples and apostles themselves (to such stupidity doth a sensual religion degrade the mind) could guess the meaning of it, albeit, as we have shewn, it be a very common similitude amongst the prophets. But that He meant it to be understood, nay, that it was His ingenious device to make it intelligible, is most manifest from the solemn admonition with which He concluded: "And when he said these things he cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." In these words I recognise the acknowledgment of that judgment of righteousness which God, by the mouth of Isaiah the prophet, had inflicted upon the Jewish nation: "Go and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not . . . , make their ears heavy . . . . lest they hear with their ears," (Isa. vi. 9.) For that this word took effect upon the nation, and is the cause of their blindness unto this day, I can have no doubt, when I find the Lord expressly declaring so in the exposition of this very parable, (Matt. xiii. 14,) and Paul doing the same, (Acts xxviii. 26, 27.) Yet, notwithstanding this general sentence, which reprobated the nation with that same freeness of will with which God had elected them, He still had a people amongst them, whom He called out and sanctified by the word of the holy prophets, and of Christ and of His apostles. These still had ears to hear; and to these He crieth. So also it is with the Papacy, who are given over to the somewhat different sentence of believing a lie: and believe it they will, till they be utterly destroyed. The lie is, that theirs is the only true holy apostolical Church, and that the Pope is infallible. And I begin to fear that God hath given the Protestant Church also up to believe a lie; which is, that she is surrounded with great light, while on the edge of the evening twilight and about to plunge into outer darkness. Still there is an election according to grace, a Church against which the gates of hell can never prevail: and to them we cry, with our Lord, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." Upon which word I have this further to say, That it is a right solemn manner of making an appeal to the very sense which heard, and taking it to witness that it would be yet raised up to witness against the spirit which heard not. Whence we should

learn, men and brethren, that those eyes of ours, which read the word of God; and those ears, which hear the preacher's voice; and those hands, which handle the sacramental symbols of the broken body and shed blood of the Lord; yea, and the carnal mind, which somewhat apprehendeth the sublimity and tasteth the beauty of God's most precious word; and the natural conscience, which beareth witness to the law, that it is holy, just, and good: these faculties of the natural man, to which God in His grace and wisdom hath sweetly accommodated His word and Spirit, shall all be raised up at the resurrection, to bear testimony against the spirit which gave not heed to their extorted testimony in the days of its flesh, but chose darkness rather than light, and evil rather than good. So that, in the end, those senses, to which the spirit is sacrificing its glorious life; yea, and this world, to whose beauty and beneficence, God-derived, it is not insensible, shall bear witness against the spirit of man in the day of judgment: and Satan shall at once have us to his prey, and in making us his prey bear the witness against us; yea, and in bearing the witness, mock us by the perjury of all his plighted faith, and by the testimony against us of that body for which we sacrificed ourselves. Therefore, he among you that hath an ear to hear, whose hearing God hath not taken away by an act inflictive of judicial deafness, let him hear what enemies are ready to pluck away this word which we preach, and hinder it from rooting in his soul.

His disciples asked Him, "What might this parable be? And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God; but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand." Why given to the disciples, is explained by Matthew in these words:—"For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance; but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath." A great principle of the Divine administrations both of providence and grace,—that according to our occupation of present gifts shall be our increase of gifts: whether that gift be Divine knowledge, as in the present case; or natural talents, as in the parable of the Talents; or the mammon of unrighteousness, as in the parable

of the Unjust Steward. Whence you will not draw that error of errors, that God's gifts are purchased by our deservings; for His gifts are all free gifts, without money and without price; whether they be gifts of nature, into which we grow from swaddled nakedness; or gifts of His grace, into which we grow also from the sincere milk of a new birth: but, though free, and unpurchased, and undeserved of the creature, (yea, contrariwise, wrath and indignation, misery and poverty of all things, being our proper deservings,) yet not the less is there a divine economy in giving, for the end of teaching us to value the gift, and making the gift profitable for the utmost possible good unto ourselves and others. Now, though these Galilean fishermen had, with the rest of their nation, much misused the gift of God revealed by the law and the prophets, and were full of carnal interpretations and selfish expectations, yet were they the readiest to receive the testimony of the Father, and of the Baptist to the Messiah, and they were of the simplest and sincerest mind to take up His instructions. Not learned, like the doctors in the law, nor, like the Pharisees, careful of the nicest demands thereof; neither prudent nor wise in the things which pertained to their nation, and of no rank nor station in the Sanhedrim;—yet were they of simple and honest minds, of an humble and true heart, and believing without guile what they did know concerning God and His blessed word. Wherefore the Lord said, with respect to these babes in knowledge, who of all the wise and prudent men of Galilee to whom He had preached, were the only ones who could receive the doctrine: "He answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." Whence ye may learn, that an humble mind and simple heart and single eye are of more help to the receiving of the blessed gospel in its life and power, than all the learning of the schools, and wisdom of the world, and outward promotion in the visible church. And you may likewise learn this other lesson, that, if you have abused your natural talents to search out and glorify other objects besides God, as He is manifested in creation, and providence, and grace; then, in

proportion to the number and greatness of those talents which you have abused, will be the blindness, and darkness, and enmity which you will be visited withal towards the simple and spiritual truth; forasmuch as it pertaineth to God's present government, as well to rule the reprobate world and the apostate church with a rod of iron, as to rule His own elect church with a sceptre of mercy and goodness. So that you need not henceforth marvel that our wise men after the flesh, and our learned men, and our scientific men—the lights, as they are called, of the world, but better named in Scripture the "rulers of its darkness," forasmuch as they are like the mole, digging ever in its dark earthiness—should oppose themselves the most to the truth as it is in Jesus, when you know that God, for their abuse of their creation-gift and providential advantages, hath visited them with judicial blindness; "blinding their eyes that they should not see, and closing their ears that they should not hear: lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand, and convert, and be healed, saith the Lord."

"Now, the parable is this: The seed is the word of God," out of which all the fruits of the Spirit do spring; the element of the new creation; the quickener of spiritual life in every soul, and regenerator of the world. Wherefore it is said by our Lord in another place, "My words, they are spirit and they are life;" and by John, "In the Word was life, and the life is the light of men;" and again by the Lord, "Man doth not live by bread alone, but by every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God;" and again by the apostle Paul, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever;" and, indeed, everywhere in the apostolic writings, which take up their language from Christ, as Christ perfected the sacred language of the prophets. Whence we gather this important point of doctrine, that it is by the word the Spirit worketh our regeneration; and that the plant may as well be expected to grow without the seed, or the harvest to be reaped before the sowing, as that the Spirit will bring forth fruit without the knowledge and belief of the word. Whence again flows the importance of disseminating the word of God over the earth, and send-

ing forth sowers of seed, which are the ministers of the churches, in order that the Spirit may have the Divine means with which to work the salvation of the world: according to the word of the holy apostle, "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent? As it is written, How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things." But though this be most true and certain, that the word is the only seed which the Spirit quickeneth into life, and without which no life shall be quickened; yet is it not quickened of the Holy Spirit without respect to Him in whose ear, and understanding, and heart, it is sown. For, as the prosperity of the seed dependeth upon the properties of the soil, and is likewise liable to many accidents which require the watchfulness of the husbandman; so is the seed of the word of God, sown by the ministers of the gospel, not independent of you, the hearers thereof, in the bringing forth of fruit. Wherefore give heed how you hear; for there be many, very many causes that may hinder it from bringing forth the fruit of everlasting life. These are by the Lord disposed into these three classes, which we barely mention at present, with short delineations, leaving the fullillustration and close application of them to future lectures.

First, "Those by the wayside are they that hear: then cometh the devil and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved." This first class I judge to be those who have surrendered themselves to unbelief, the express and especial work of Satan; because it is said, "lest they should believe and be saved:" such as, being lifted up with the pride of intellect and knowledge, have fallen into the snare of the devil; upon whom Satan hardly permitteth the seed of the word to rest for a moment, snatching it away by some of his evil angels, who stand ready to suggest some proud objection as to the goodness of the reasoning, or the truth of the matter; perhaps some witticism, foolish

fancy, or critical censure of the manner of the minister; whereby the word that hath entered by the ear sinketh no deeper than the understanding, whence it is flung forth again with disdain. But besides these infidel scorners, the Sadducees of every age, we must include here also another class, who, receiving the letter of the truth, do reject its spirit and substance; which is as if these birds of the air, after taking out the seed of corn, should leave upon the field the husk in which it was enclosed. Of which class I may safely say the great multitude of the visible church doth now consist; who take up religion as a reputable profession, and will consent to do many things which their preacher teacheth them—in the way of alms, good neighbourhood, religious observances, church-dues, and such-like easy acts, whereby they please themselves with thinking that they are earning heaven: and they rejoice in the prospect of another world, as good, and even better, than the present; and reverence the name of Christ, as the messenger, and in some way the procurer, thereof. But when they are called upon to mortify the flesh, with its corruptions and lusts—to deny themselves to worldly indulgences; to forego all trust in their own merits, and to put their trust wholly in the righteousness of Christ; yea, to hate and abhor themselves in dust and ashes; they kick against the truth, and withstand its ministers; and fall into the snare of the devil. If any feel conscious to themselves of such indifference and disrespect to the word of God, let them know that they are under Satan's mystery, who hath stirred them up to refuse the grace and mercy of the God of heaven, in order that he may have them wholly and for ever unto himself. And, oh! it is no less than a satanic influence which can make the soul contemptuous of the word of God, which is peace on earth, and goodwill to the children of men. You would think it a mad inspiration of hell, if one of your children were to turn his father's tenderness into ridicule, and mock the affectionate words of his mother: and still more, if that child, having rebelled, and being in misery, should refuse your offer of forgiveness and parental grace. Then, indeed, a man is well said to be possessed of Satan, when his stark and violent pride tramples upon every tender relation, and chooses

solitary misery and sullen scorn, in preference to peace, concord, society, and love. Such, and worse, are they who hear the word of God with scoffs and mockeries; being possessed of Satan, and by Satan furnished with triple pride, to cast back unto God the overtures of grace and mercy which the minister of the gospel bringeth from our offended and reconciled Father. To whom I can but give this short warning of their true condition, and proceed to the second class of unprofitable hearers.

Secondly, "That on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy: and these have no root; which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away." This class includeth those in whom Satan hath not been able to excite animosities against the word of God, which they hear with joy, because of the mercy and love and blessedness whereof it bringeth them the assurance; thinking to enter at once into the joy of the Lord; not counting the cost, nor humbling themselves to bear the cross, but expecting it as so much clear gain and additional advantage to the worldly goods they are endowed withal. These are they who would leap at once into the open arms of Jesus; who cry for assurance and enjoyment from the beginning of their Christian life, and will not hear of the processes of the Spirit to root and ground in the faith, of the husbandry of the Father to prune and dress, nor of the office of Christ to withhold or to bestow, to lead into temptation and to deliver from it. I have not time to designate them more particularly, but my eye is distinctly upon them as they flutter about in the sunbeam. How many have I known who have received the very truth in the love of it, and in the faith of the true gospel joined themselves to the Church of Christ, who, when the novelty of the first impression hath passed away, and Satan hath arrayed to them some form of enticement, have fallen into it, even without any formal persecution or real trouble because of their faith! Which kind of converts I think this city is wondrously fitted to produce. Whether it be owing to the lust of novelty and excitement, or the unstable character and infirm resolutions of the people, I know not, but certain it is, that I find this class of transient believers and

fair-weather Christians of too frequent occurrence amongst professors of the truth.

The third class, which is figured by the seed that fell among thorns, is composed of those "who, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares, and riches, and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection." This needeth no explanation, but is manifest unto every one who readeth. And how large a class it includeth of our most able and judicious and gifted men, it is most lamentable to reckon up! They hear the word; they believe it; they know it to be true, and believe it to be the one thing needful; and it hath a root in them, and groweth up: but it cometh not to fruit-bearing in the various offices and duties of life, where it is met by cares, occupations of trade, and pleasures of society, which occupy all the ground and draw off the vigour of the soil, so that such believers arrive at no degree in the Church of Christ. Oh, if the Lord give me grace to be faithful, what a great number of my beloved people will I be called upon to admonish, and earnestly to warn, from this head of discourse!

Lastly, "That on the good ground are they, which, in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience;" not having rejected it by the suggestions of satanic pride, like the first class; nor heard it with itching ears, like the second: but received it into the heart, and that an honest and good heart,—sincere in its purposes; not self-deceiving, but honest and true: good, moreover; that is, well-affected towards that which is good, and therefore receiving the word because it tasteth it to be good. Which having received, it doth not cast forth again, like a thin soil; neither is impatient of delay and trial; nor suffereth worldly interests to intervene: but with patience bringeth forth fruit, believing that "in due time we shall reap if we faint not." This class includeth all true believers, and presenteth us, if I may so speak, with the natural history of true faith, the soil in which it taketh root, and the patient culture under which it beareth fruit; as we shall shew at length hereafter.

Such is the introduction to a large, pregnant, and most profitable subject of discourse; on which we shall bestow our

profitable subject of discourse; on which we shall bestow our pains, and by which, under the blessing of God, we shall seek to instruct you in the right use of the preaching of the word as a means of grace, following the fourfold division of the Lord: first, the rejectors; secondly, the unstable believers; thirdly, the fruitless believers; and, fourthly, the fruitless believers of the word. Meanwhile, all ye seeking instruction, be taught that the word will be assailed by these threefold forms of trial: Satan tempting you to reject it as a cunningly devised fable; persecutions subtle and insidious leading you to forego the hold which you have gladly taken of it; thorny cares of this world choking its growth unto maturity, and hindering it from issuing in good fruit, to the glory of God, the honour of the church and the profit of your own souls. Wherefore, my dearly beloved, be warned, and on your guard against these your enemies; and seek the Divine blessing, without which Paul may plant, and Apollos may water in vain. And be ever on your guard against oppressive and delusive cares of this world; going forth into the world as armed men to battle, with wary steps; and circumspect, as men who have to do with ambush-laying enemies: having always the banner of your salvation displayed, and following the footsteps of your brave and merciful Commander, who sendeth no one a warfare on His own charge; "praying always, with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all diligence, and prayer for all saints; and for me, that to me may be given with openness of mouth, in boldness, to make known the mystery of the gospel."

LECTURE I.

THE SEED THAT FELL BY THE WAYSIDE, WHICH THE BIRDS OF THE AIR SNATCHED AWAY.

FROM this parable it is manifest that our Lord did not expect the preaching of the gospel was to be attended with the fruit of universal conversion, as many of His disciples and ministers in these our times conceive: for, of all the seed which the sower sowed, three parts brought forth no fruit, through the prevailing power of evil; that part only ripening which was sown upon the good soil of an honest and a good heart. Whence, I think, it is not to be doubted that our Lord anticipated that poor and unprofitable reception which His word has received from the sons of men, and instructed His preachers to expect more frequently to be baffled than to prevail. And, even among that which doth take root and grow up, we are taught in another parable that the enemy soweth tares, which can by no means be separated, until He who is the Judge shall come with His fan in His hand thoroughly to purge His floor. To this also agree the words of the Scriptures, that "many are called, but few are chosen;" that it is a "little flock" to whom it hath pleased the Father to give the kingdom; that "strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

Now, forasmuch as the preaching of the word is all the means of converting men, which under this present dispensation we do hold in our hand, and the Word himself doth here declare that it was to be effectual only to a very partial conversion of men, I judge it to be manifest that we are not yet furnished with the means for the universal conversion of the world; and that we have reason to expect, before that great

event promised in all the prophecies can take effect, some other instrument, more efficacious than any which we at present possess: and that, though the ministry of the gospel be universal in respect to the bounds over which it is commissioned, it is not universal in respect to the end which it hath to accomplish; but only partial, as was the ministry of the law and the prophets, which raised up a race of prophets and witnesses in one nation, whereas it is our higher province to raise up a race of prophets and witnesses for God over all nations.

This is a most important conclusion, which the preacher of the gospel must ever bear in mind, otherwise he will wholly frustrate and pervert the intention of the great Prophet of our calling. If he take up the notion that the gospel is for universal conversion, he will be like to a man rushing into the battle with armour which he believes to be enchanted against the dint of hostile weapons, whereas the enchantment is only in his own Quixotic fancy, as he will prove at the first onset: and, finding that he doth not succeed, according to his fond expectation and false hope, in bearing down all opposition, he will next begin to imagine that this poor success ariseth from his own unskilfulness; which he beginneth forthwith to amend by various sleights of tongue and cunning artifices, gracious accommodations and pious frauds, in order to bring about that universal triumph over wickedness, which was never intended to be the trophy of preaching under its present form. I have no doubt, though I cannot in this place spare time to demonstrate at length, that the greater part of the corruptions of preaching have sprung from this very error, of expecting the conversion of the whole world from the faculties with which Christ hath endowed the ministers of the word, instead of expecting merely the raising up of a race of witnesses, by whose patient testimony to condemn the world, and justify that great act of visible judgment with which this present dispensation is to be consummated, and the universal dispensation is to be ushered in, at the second coming of the Lord. This remark is not less important to hearers than to preachers of the word. For, while it delivers the latter from false expectations, and wicked endeavours to insinuate a corrupt and disguised gospel into the world, it teacheth the

former that the very word which is unto salvation may fail to convert them—nay, will fail, and by God is designed to fail—except on their parts they bestir themselves to activity, and watch against the enemies of the word, who contend against it so successfully, and who shall surely defeat its efficacy, unless they be fellow-workers with the Spirit of God and the ministers of His holy word. And now I will point out the first form in which the enemy seeks to prevent the quickening of the word of God.

"Those by the wayside are they who hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved."—In the conclusion of my former lecture, when sketching out the four varieties of persons in the parable, I made this class to consist of the unbelievers of the word altogether, or the rejectors of its kernel and substance, which only is seed procreative of the fruits of the kingdom; but the more diligent attention which I have given to the subject hath convinced me that this is too narrow a definition of the class before us, which must include all who, from any cause, retain not the seed of the word sown in their hearts. Matthew hath it, "who hear the word of the kingdom and understand it not:" from which you will not infer that there is any class of the people who are of too dull an intellect or too narrow a capacity to understand so much of the word as is necessary unto salvation; for it is well written that "the law is exceeding broad," and the word so written that "he who runneth may read," and "the wayfaring man, though a fool, shall not err therein." The word of God is eyes to the blind, understanding to the simple, and very nigh unto us all. The truth of God is plain unto children, and His fear is the beginning of wisdom, and His praise is ordained even out of the mouths of babes and of sucklings. Mothers can testify how easy access the lessons of early piety findeth to the slender capacities of childhood; and missionaries, who have addressed the word to the rudest of heathens, have manifested how little the gospel dependeth for its success upon the previous culture of the mind. There is, indeed, no error more fatal to the heathen world than that we must wait the

previous culture of literature and science before preaching the gospel unto them: and at home there is an error fast encroaching upon our schools, and shewing itself in our school-books, that years must be waited for, and the ripening of understanding before the faith can be received. And, among the many errors which adult baptism tendeth to, it is none of the least that it should favour this notion, that men are not competent to faith from their earliest youth, but must wait for maturity of years. But, to put all this beyond a doubt, our Lord hath said, when speaking of the reception and rejection of His word, that it was "hid from the wise and the prudent, and revealed unto babes:" which St Paul hath confirmed in these words, "Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called."

This want of understanding, which rejecteth the word so soon as it is sown in the heart, not therefore proceeding from any natural want of faculties or years, must be sought for in other causes; of which four suggest themselves to my mind as containing the whole. First, Those in whom the spiritual and moral faculty, which comprehendeth the invisible things of the word of God, is darkened, deafened, and engrossed; so that it is dead in trespasses and sins, in worldliness and disbelief. Secondly, Those in whom the spiritual and moral faculty for perceiving the obligation of invisible things still liveth, but can take in no more than the dispensation of natural law: who feel their responsibility, and make an endeavour to fulfil it, but never come to the knowledge of original sin and creature infirmity, and therefore cannot receive the word of Christ's righteousness and mediatorial kingdom. These reject the word, as the Pharisees did, on account of their attachment to the dispensation of natural conscience, and their ignorance of the bondage of the will. Thirdly, the schismatic, who maketh divisions in the truth, and, running with wild enthusiasm after a part, neglecteth the rest, and is deaf to it. Fourthly, The heretic, who, instead of the truth, hath set up and exalted some other thing, with the love of which Satan deludes him to reject the word of God. These four—the blinded sensualist, who cannot believe; the self-

sufficient moralist, who will not believe; the schismatic, who will believe only a favourite part; and the heretic, who preferreth to believe a falsehood—I perceive are all led by Satan promptly to reject and cast away the truth declared unto them; Satan assuming a distinct character to each: to the first appearing as the prince of this world; to the second, as a minister of righteousness; to the third, as a proud and subtle spirit of knowledge; to the fourth, as a liar and murderer, which he was from the beginning. To each of those let us attend in order.

I.—THE BLIND SENSUALIST.

That want of understanding which is the cause of the rejection of the word, our Lord hath Himself explained to arise from moral causes—the depravation of the heart by vice, and the engrossment of the mind with the much study of sensible and visible matters; quoting, in St Matthew's account of the parable, these words of the Prophet Isaiah: "By hearing, ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing, ye shall see, and shall not perceive: for this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their hearts, and should be converted, and I should heal them." This is that fearful want of understanding, or rather incapacity of understanding, upon which the word of the Lord falleth powerless; that fearful state of the mind, when in the wrath of God it hath been left in a condition of powerlessness; which visitation becoming general, doth constitute a crisis in a people, and bring on a speedy judgment. It was so with Israel in Isaiah's time, and judgment soon followed. It was so with Judah in our Lord's time, before the fall of Jerusalem: and Paul found it so at Rome with the emigrant Jews, with whom, after he had reasoned from morning until evening out of the Scriptures, and could make them to understand nothing, he concluded with those very words of Isaiah the prophet to which our Lord referreth in the parable. Now, as I conceive this to be exactly the state of mind to which our lettered people, reputed wise and prudent, with all the hosts who drink

of their polluted streams of thought, have arrived, and which is drawing on the crisis, not only of this nation, but of Christendom in general, I hold it good to open its causes a little, and shew you how, from the very nature of things, such men are unable to receive the word of the kingdom of Christ.

For the word of God addresseth itself to the spiritual wants of man, and proposeth to redress them; setting itself against the bodily appetites and carnal affections, it proposeth to restrain them from being masters, and constrain them to the service of God; setting itself against the vain distinctions and ornaments of life, it proposeth to establish the solid distinctions of moral duty in our several relations, and of heavenly honours in the world to come; and finally, setting itself against malice and enmity and pride, it proposeth to establish such a spirit of love and such a community of interests, as that a man shall love his neighbour as himself. The first word of the kingdom of Christ is, that we must be born again; and the second is, that we must forsake father, and mother, and brother, and sister, and our own life, to become Christ's disciples; and the third, that if we love the world, and the things of the world, the love of the Father is not in us—and so forth, through an infinite number of self-denying, inexpedient, unworldly notes doth the strain of the gospel prolong itself. Perceive you not, then, that there must be multitudes upon multitudes who cannot hear nor understand this strain at all; which is to them, like the music of the spheres, either a fiction and fallacy, or else so subtle and refined as to be to their ears all inaudible, and as if it were not! For, what myriads are there whose god is their belly and its lusts; and what myriads who glory in their shame, and will not endure any blame or contradiction! what multitudes who cherish revenge; who call pleasure the best, and money the most needful of all things; who hold nothing to be good save as it is profitable—base burden-bearers, sordid money-makers, slaves of every sense, and idolaters of every passion! You might sooner look for verdure upon the sands of the sea-shore, or fields of corn in the Lapland snows, than expect the word of God to take root in such a soil.

Along with these there be icy men of the intellect, hard of

heart, sharp of wit, and dogmatical in knowledge; who will have everything proved to their understanding before they will give it ear,—a demand which is merely impossible in spiritual things delivered from faith to faith; and who despise the natural motions of their spirit towards purity and honesty and goodness,—holding all such emotions, which are the cravings of the reason of man after the revelation of God, to be no better than womanish weakness; and the truths which God hath ministered to them, to be no better than old wives' fables. But the Lord saith, "No! I will not plead my cause before your partial and divided being. Ye shall not scorn the spirit that I have put within you, nor expect me to speak to your sense as a piece of matter doth, or to your understanding as doth a phenomenon of the material world. I will take no part with, and give no countenance to, such self-murder in my creatures. I am a Spirit, and will speak to your spirit concerning righteousness and truth, and love and mercy and fearful holiness; but if ye will not suffer your spirit to hear then, Behold, ye despisers, and perish: I work a work, and ye see not; I speak a word, and ye hear not. Ye will not hear me in that way in which I reveal my mind: then prepare to see my hand and to feel my power in making you desolate, until your cities be without inhabitants, and the land without men to sow it and to reap it."—In our Lord's time, one said to the invitation, I have married a wife, and I cannot come; another, I have bought a yoke of oxen, and go to prove them; another hasted after his merchandise to the city: and so they heard him not, till fire came down from heaven and made them feel Him whom they would not hear. But in our time, to these are added pride of intellect. "I am above all that nonsense," one saith; and another, "It is unphilosophical;" and a third, "It is a piece of state policy;" and a fourth, "Such a one teacheth otherwise: we have nothing of it in our schools; and our masters would surely speak of it if they thought there was anything in it which profiteth. It profiteth us nothing."—Ah! brethren, it is not your Humes and Voltaires and Paines, who make a people incapable of receiving the word: these men are creatures of the hour; cast up by the current, like sandy islands of the sea, or floating substances,

which the eddy of the current whirleth into a certain consistency and driveth at its will: but it is ignorance and sensuality, and intellect employed upon merely outward things, which makes men fall away by whole hosts from the belief of Divine truth. Our people are become altogether outward and unspiritual: be they learned, it is in outward knowledge; be they political, it is for the greatest visible advantage; be they of the unlearned classes, they are degraded with hard labour, relieved with sensual indulgence, and regaled with malicious speeches and schemes against their superiors. They are alike ignorant that they have a spirit immortal, to rule the sense, presently oppressed by the sense, and by Christ to be redeemed from the sense. Talk to them of their spirit, they will ask you to prove its existence; as if a man should ask you to prove that he hath eyes, which if he have not yet discovered, you need not much trouble yourself with the proof: so these men, having no belief in the spirit, or the conscience, or the responsible will, but saying, I am as God made me, and caring not to know what God hath done or said to redeem them, do shew that they cannot understand the word of God, which speaketh to the spirit, and will not hold any converse with the sense alone, save to rebuke it for its base presumption to set itself up to rule, nor with the understanding which judgeth by the sense, save to rebuke its preposterous pride in exalting itself above its place of servant to the spirit. And thus it cometh to pass, that multitudes cannot receive the seed of the word of God, because they understand it not, having oppressed the faculty which alone is competent to understand it; upon whom it falleth like seed upon the arid and frequented highway, to be trampled under foot or snatched away; and well may it be said of such, "Eyes have they, but they see not; ears have they, but they hear not; neither do they understand."

That this is the present character of our lettered classes, I have not ceased from declaring since it pleased God to call me to this ministry: and that they will use their influence, through their vile traffic in newspapers and magazines, and by schools of various sorts, to impress the same character upon the common people also, I have from the beginning perceived,

and I am glad that at length my brethren in the ministry are beginning to perceive it likewise. Now, where lies the cure? I believe the cure would have lain in preventing it; and that when it is once established, there is no cure but in destruction: society must go to wreck for ever, or else one generation must be well-nigh cut off. A nation never recovers gradually out of an unspiritual state, when it hath suffered itself to fall away from one that is spiritual. The disease bursts out in a running sore of revolution, and it is long, long before it heals. But why is there no cure? For this reason, that when a people fear not God they will no longer regard the laws and ordinances of man. Religion is not a thing of the creed merely, though its foundation be there: the family rests upon it; the marriage knot is tied by it, and all the social obligations; the political bond is joined by it: every relation of superiors with inferiors hath its safeguard in religion, which is the reverence of invisible obligation. Make man disbelieve the invisible in the highest sphere of the Divine will, and he will soon disregard it in the lower spheres of the family, the household, and the state. Even already it is come to be disregarded with us among servants, who often see in their masters more to hate than to love: even now it is disregarded in the state, which is more talked against than commended by the people. And what family ties are there amongst our operative classes, I know, who have seen them in their best and worst conditions; and am bold to declare, that in general parents make gain of their children, and children seek to be rid of their parents. Would to God this were the painting of my imagination! I cannot say, with St Paul, that I could wish myself accursed from Christ so that it were not so; but I can say, I would give this life ten times over that it were but a dream of my own. But I have seen it all, and see it growing daily worse; and I know it must be so in such a state of outwardness as we are come into. "But what is the cure?" I say, the only cure is Jehovah's right hand and outstretched arm, which will come in time. "But what is the part of the minister of the gospel in such a crisis?" To tell that the wrath is gathering. "And no more?" To tell the people to flee from it, and lay open the way of escape by re-

pentance and turning unto the Lord. "And no more?" Yea, no more. "May not you argue it with the people?" Ay, argue it; but this is the only argument they will bear: for they see nothing but their interest and pleasure, and they hear nothing but their profit and loss; therefore the Lord is about to plead with them by blows and bereavements. "May we not condescend to argue it in the court of the intellect merely?" I think not. "May we not dress out an argument of the political advantage?" I think not. "What then?" Give forth the truth in a thundering peal of wrath: "Repent, or ye shall all likewise perish: Repent and believe, or ye shall all likewise perish."

So the question standeth with the idolaters of the sensible and visible, of the profitable and expedient, who in these times compose the great body of the people, both learned and unlearned, both high and low; to whom Satan appeareth as the prince of the knowledge and power of the visible world; wherewith he doth so take and captivate their senses, and occupy all the faculties of their mind (if mind it may be called) as to make them blind and deaf, and of little or no understanding to hear, discern, or apprehend the eternal truth, which is only spiritually discerned. This is his infidel form, dressed out in all the glory of natural science, and all the ornaments of the fine and mechanical arts; as he now sheweth himself in this land, yea, in this age, leading an immense multitude away from the faith of the gospel, and scattering diverse temptations into the Church; which are taking effect and producing the affectation of science, and scientific language, and scientific methods of education, to which this age is so very prone. And connected with it you shall always find either refined or vulgar sensuality; the ambition of bodily or household ornaments and indulgences; the thirst for money to gratify the same; the ambition of outward distinctions and visible glories for vanity and ostentation, with a great quantity of furniture and apparatus of life unknown and desired in a simple and spiritual age which, if you would behold, look around you: whereby Satan not only hath led astray the whole faculty of the scientific men of Europe, with some one or two exceptions, but the great body of the undergraduates

and day-labourers in this fraternity—that is, the artists and the artizans, the mechanicians and the mechanics—of whom by far the greater multitude you shall find very speedily, if they be not already, plucked away from the ordinance of preaching, and despising the word of God, which, amongst its other blessings, hath made us such a wise and skilful people. Wherein behold the black ingratitude of the child to the mother; for the spiritual is that which hath given to this land such mighty power over the mechanical, as now hath caught us and our rulers with its idolatry: for which ingratitude to His Church, when the Lord's long-suffering is exhausted, we shall be visited with those terrible judgments whereby alone the Lord is able to make a sensual and outward people to understand His voice.

II.—THE SELF-SUFFICIENT MORALIST.

I do now proceed to Satan's second form of address, whereby he plucketh the seed of the true gospel, and the elemental principle of true spiritual life, from the heart of another class of people, in the feigned character of an angel of light and minister of righteousness. And now, may the Lord give me grace to discover and declare the artifice of the tempter against this numerous class of formal professors, who yet believe themselves the only true Church of Christ! For there be multitudes who are alive to all the social duties, and most careful of them, who love the Church, and think themselves believers in the gospel, and yet will not receive the word of the kingdom, which, if you preserve pure and unadulterated, in its essential characters and substantial fulness, they will certainly reject. These are the self-righteous; who, trusting to be justified by their own works, and regarding the law as a rule of life to the natural man, and no sentence of death, do consider the gospel as a gracious overlooking of, and atonement for the unavoidable sins and frailties of human nature—a dispensation of mercy, added, as it were, to counteract the dispensation of righteousness, and so to balance the two parts of the Almighty's infinite being around the fulcrum of human

weakness. This class which within the professing Church is as frightfully numerous as the other class is without it, do reject the true doctrine of the gospel, the sincere word of the kingdom, with as much scorn as they; and withal, they consider themselves in the light of the mediators and defenders of God's Church, from the infidels on the one hand, and these factious enthusiasts and wild Methodists upon the other. And in the visible Church there are multitudes of prophets who prophesy such lies, and propagate such errors to these deluded people. Woe be to these false prophets! woe be to them! for they build a wall with untempered mortar, they corrupt the gospel of salvation, giving the people ashes for bread; and they shall assuredly be cut off, they and all that lean unto them.

These men Satan hath as ready at his nod as he hath the material worldlings; winding them to his purposes by their self-sufficient pride, as he windeth the others about by their utter darkness and incapacity of beholding truth. The Pharisees in our Lord's time were like to these; in outward observances, in obedience to the letter of the law, in upholding the forms and ceremonies of Moses, as these do uphold the letter and form of their several communions; like, moreover, in despising a humble and crucified Saviour, His humble and crucified followers. I class them with the former—who are as the Sadducees of our Lord's time, denying spirit, and resurrection, and a spiritual world—because they agree with them in not allowing the word to take root in their soul. It may seem harsh so to join together these outward professors with those outward deniers, but the truth of interpretation obligeth me. They cannot be taken along with the second, who hear the word gladly, for they will not even suffer it to be spoken to them, but do interdict it over all the bounds of their influence, and persecute mainly all who bear witness to it; and they cannot be taken along with the third class, who have it abiding in them, and believe and hold nothing else, but bring forth no fruit, by reason of the poisonous damps and exhalations, the scorching heats, and exhausting weeds, of worldly cares and pursuits. And as they are not of the

honest and good class, who are fruitful, with whom can they be classed, but with those who at once reject the word, and will not hold it for a moment? And let no one wonder at this conjunction of Pharisee and Sadducee: for Satan is proud, as well as earthly; is devilish, as well as sensual; appeareth as an angel of light, as well as a fiend of destruction: wherefore marvel not that he hath two bands trooping under his banner, and yielding obedience to his high commands. In this first class, therefore, of hearers who understand not, I include all religionists who will not receive in simplicity this truth,—that they are in themselves an overflowing fountain of sin and unrighteousness, that the law is their condemnation and death; and that they are not otherwise to be saved than by faith in the redemption of Christ Jesus, and the baptism of the Holy Ghost, which He bestows upon all who repent and believe the gospel with that faith which is the gift of the Father. They are known by many characteristics, which it may be good to point out for the warning of all.

The greater number are those who, holding the orthodox faith of the Church, will not be instructed therein by the Spirit, but hold it in the letter, and ridicule as enthusiasts all who speak of the spiritual understanding thereof. These will do many things at the preacher's bidding, as did Herod; and oft make their delight in perfecting a form of duty, which they consider as the whole and complete duty of man; being content to take the sacrament, while they know nothing of the mystery of either sacrament, or of the word of God; which, when a faithful minister standeth up to make them acquainted withal, they are offended, and hate him! Now, what is the cure of such? To preach unto them the whole truth of the spiritual gospel; not to indulge them—(away with these indulgence-sellers! they have always been the scandal of the Church)—to preach to them the spiritual truth of the new birth, and the new man, and the new life; and ever anon to bring a back-stroke with the sword of the law, in order to smite down another and another hydra-head of self-righteousness; then heal the wound

with the balm of Gilead: and so proceed in the work of wounding and making alive, of crucifixion and resurrection, of death and life, which is the true progress of the divine work; its emblem being a dead body rising from the grave, or, as the ancients had it, "a phœnix rising from its ashes," in which emblem was hidden a deep mystery of the truth. But I cannot away with those who would accommodate the gospel to the ears of such, and sing ditties of entreaty in a sweet and winning strain, as if the gospel came on bended knee to crave mercy of men; when they should lift up their voice to the pitch of thunder, in order to awaken those self-sufficient sleepers, whom I think the trump of the archangel alone will awaken. 'These backsliding children of Israel are to be recalled, as the prophets heretofore were wont to recall Israel, by accusation, upbraiding, entreaty, threatening,—a mingled strain, only proper to the ministers of God when declaring His counsel to a gainsaying people whom He hath long entreated with the outstretched arms of His love.

The law is good, as saith the apostle, if a man use it lawfully; yea, it is holy, and just, and good, and most necessary to be had in remembrance of every disciple, and to be made known by every minister of Christ. Whether it be referred to as written on the stony tables for the use of Moses and the former Church, as delivered from the mount by the Lord, and by the Spirit extended in the writings of the holy apostles, or written by nature with less or more distinctness on every heart; it is most necessary to be held up conspicuously in the sight of all men, as the handwriting that is against us, the *mene tekel upharsin* before every man's eyes, which saith, "Thou art weighed in the balance, and art found wanting." It is the sentence of death, which was necessary to be given forth from the court of heaven, ere man, vapouring, self-sufficient man, could be brought into a mood of gentleness and humility to desire or to hear a gospel of forgiveness. "Forgive!" He saith, "whom forgive? Redeem! whom redeem? Pardon! whom pardon? Of whom do you hold that impertinent language? You must first shew me whereof I am accused, and of what I am guilty. What law have I broken?

Talk not to me of imprisonment, who am at large; of forgiveness, who am uncondemned; of pardon, who am not arraigned." Now this is exactly what God hath done by giving the law before the gospel, in order to bring the whole world into condemnation, and conclude both Jew and Gentile guilty before him. And therefore the law should still be preached with thunder and lightning, and other tokens of trembling judgment and outbursting wrath, as upon Mount Sinai of old.

And as such I do now declare it unto you, ye hypocrites, ye Pharisees, ye generation of vipers! Which of God's commandments have ye not broken, ye fornicators and adulterers? Ye have set up idols, and bowed down before them; ye have taken the name of God in vain, and profaned His holy day; ye have neglected every duty of children and parents, of inferiors, and superiors, and equals; ye have murdered the reputation and defiled the chastity of the innocent; ye have been dishonest in your dealings; and ye have borne false witness. "When?" Ye do it continually. That constitution of life which you follow out in the world is one universal breach of every commandment, either in the letter or in the spirit of it. Your best acts are sinful; your holy things are polluted; you are altogether defiled in your natural man; and the greatest proof of it is that ye have not yet discovered it. Come, and let us look into the law of God, that you may discover that deformity, that vile deformity, of which hitherto ye know little or nothing. Hast thou said of thy brother, "Thou fool," without a cause? that is against thee. Hast thou looked upon the beauty and elegance of woman, to lust after it? that is adultery. Hast thou looked upon anything that pertaineth to another, to covet it? that is theft. Hast thou done any alms, or other good work, to be seen of man? that is hypocrisy. And hast thou given all honour and glory to God, and hast thou worshipped Him only, and in thy eating and drinking hast thou done nothing to please the flesh? and in thy speaking hast thou said nothing to exalt thyself? O thou vain man! it is thy ignorance, thy dark, blind ignorance, which maketh thee so vaunting. Thou must go to school to learn thyself. And thy schoolmaster—who is thy schoolmaster?—even the law, that is thy schoolmaster, to bring thee unto Christ. The

law will scourge thy self-sufficiency to death. Study the law that is inwoven with the gospel, and it shall teach thee what a vile body of sin and death thou art. Thy ignorance is fearful; thy remedy is hopeless if thou wilt not look into the law, and by the law be humbled, crucified, and slain. 'For, as thou well saidst it, Why speak to me of a Saviour, of a Redeemer, and the rest of that gospel cant, who am in no risk, nor danger, nor captivity, nor death?

Satan moveth these Pharisees to dishonour the law, by hiding its true spiritual character under their traditionary formalities. They cut and carve it down to the rules of society, and the laws of the realm, and the natural kindness of the human heart. It is no longer God's express will, unchangeable; but man's variable will, changeable according to every one's humour. It is no longer the awful pale of perfect and pure blessedness, but the fence of every man's conceit. A useless, cumbersome, inconvenient thing, for which man hath no use, and which heaven will not acknowledge, is this law, when they have tampered with it after the manner they do. In whose place I would not stand for the gain of the whole world, which "shall pass away before one jot or tittle of the law shall pass," though all mankind should conspire to explain it away: and he who shall break the least tittle thereof, or teach men to do so, shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: nay, but "he who keepeth the whole law, and offendeth in one point, is guilty of all." Who, then, would keep the law in its honour and purity against these seducers and spoilers, let him believe in the gospel of Christ, and by faith receive the Spirit of holiness and righteousness; to convince him more and more of sin; to possess him more and more with the desire of holiness, and beget within him the obedience of God's will and the denial of his own, to create within him a new man, after the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness. Which inward man, formed after the image of Christ, craveth after righteousness, and holdeth the old Adam in continual restraint, and feedeth and groweth upon the word of God as his milk, and delighteth in the law of God as his meat and drink, and "it is sweeter to the taste than honey and the honeycomb." To the spiritual man, which is Christ

formed within us the hope of glory, the Father doth come, and the Son and the Holy Ghost doth come, to dwell with him: by whose presence Satan is expelled out of the spirit into the flesh, and there is bound a prisoner till death, whereby captivity is led captive; and at the resurrection the flesh is also delivered, after which we keep the law without let or hindrance, and are without spot or blemish presented before the throne of God. Thus the gospel maketh the law honourable; and thus to all the saints in Christ Jesus we do preach the law as a rule of life, as a law of liberty and delight: while to the unbelieving and unsanctified world we cease not to preach it as a curse and condemnation and sentence of death.

But these formalists know nothing of all this, nor will hear anything of it. For why? Because Satan hath ministered from the altar of God fuel to every bitter affection of nature, calling it holy; and they are wrapt up in an all-enveloping mantle of self-righteousness, which they prize dearly, substituting it for the garment of the Redeemer's righteousness. They have no further use for Christ than as a lawgiver, whose laws they fancy themselves perfect in; as a Saviour, whose salvation they deem it best to be beholden to as seldom as possible. They think that it is to make Christ the pope of indulgences, to expect salvation only through His righteousness: and so they have a terrible hatred of faithful doctrine, as the very sink of religion; which were it to become general, they think would be the end of all order and obedience in human society. And they are Satan's most creditable servants, through whom he ever taketh occasion to wound Christ's members, having always some self-righteous Laud to head the persecution of the true spiritual Church. They would welcome Christ into a temple of money-changers and market-makers, which when He addresseth Himself to cleanse, straightway they are offended. They make the outside of the platter clean, and are whited sepulchres. I would not speak evil of dignities; but it is necessary to speak the truth in the house of God, and everywhere; and the truth, being spoken in a gracious and loving spirit, is not evil, but good, to every one, and woe unto him who is offended in it!—now the truth obligeth me to declare that this is the miserable condition of

the great multitude of our professors, and even ministers, of religion, and of our dignitaries, both in Church and State: and, which is of great importance to us, it is the evil which most easily doth beset an Established Church, into which Satan cannot introduce himself by infidelity, or sectarianism, or heresy, and therefore he doth introduce himself by this door of formality and self-righteousness; against which, therefore, seeing the great part of us have been reared under an Established Church, I do warn you the more earnestly. Not that Satan hath been able to shut your ears against the truth of "Christ your righteousness," which indeed our Church hath been ever right glad to hear, and our people will bear nothing contrary thereto; but because self-conceit lurketh in the heart, and fasteneth itself around the roots of the plant, which never cometh to any stature or fruitfulness but by the destruction of the old man, whose life consisteth in self-contentment and self-sufficiency. There appertaineth to the children reared up in our Church a formality of doctrine, a security of orthodoxy, an unproductiveness of the truth, falling properly under the third class of hearers, in whom the seed is choked, yet I cannot now pass without warning you of it. Ye do not trust in your works I know; ye trust in Christ alone for salvation; but what proof have ye, what trial make ye of your saving interest in Christ? "Why stand ye all the day idle?" Why make ye no advancement? Is Christ no longer a quickener? is the Holy Spirit no longer a dew unto the soul? Why are you barren and withered, when your Lord looks for fruit from you? Who knows but He may curse you, as He did the barren fig-tree? Know ye not that "the earth which receiveth the seed, and the showers of heaven, yet bringeth forth only thorns and briers, is nigh unto cursing?" The Intercessor may intercede for another year: yea, He hath interceded, else you would have been cut off ere this. Year passeth after year, and findeth us no better. O brethren! why this backwardness? why this slowness of faith? why this dulness of hearing? This is almost as hopeless as positive error. The state of the Laodicean church is full of danger, as ye well do know: and His coming is at hand. Oh that you were ready! that I might be able to give in my account with joy, and not with grief.

O my God! what a subtle fiend is Satan, thus to gather together all the ruins of the natural man—his sense of beauty and loveliness, his imagination of glory and excellence, his conviction of truth and righteousness, his desire of mercy and benevolence, his capacity of wisdom and goodness—all these, the surviving fragments of Thy goodly handiwork, which Thou hast sought, by the revelation of power and love in Jesus Christ, to build again into a spiritual and a glorious temple, for Thine own spiritual glory to inhabit, to have possessed himself of, and out of them to have formed a house for pride, glory, ambition, and other forms of self-idolatry to dwell in! And how daring withal is this subtle spirit, to have ventured into the sanctuary of Thy Holy Word, and stolen thence the fire with which to offer up the daily sacrifice in the temple of human self-sufficiency which he had builded unto himself! For these, his worshippers, call themselves Thy worshippers; they declare themselves to be believers in Thy Son; and they denominate themselves Thy Church, Thy sanctified, separated, and elected Church. I pray thee, O Lord, to make such profanation to cease, and speedily to reveal Thy judgments upon all such inventions and falsehoods of Satan; that it may be made manifest that they are not the true Israel, but of the synagogue of Satan. And this prayer I offer with true faith, because I perceive that it is against these idol-shepherds and their idolatrous flocks that the Lord revealeth His hottest indignation: as witnesseth the Jewish Church; as witnesseth the Papal apostasy, where this system of works hath legalised, constituted, and deified itself; and soon shall witness the visible outward professing Church among ourselves, if they renounce not this same Pelagian doctrine of human merit and legal righteousness. The Lord doth not give His glory unto another; and the glory of His true Church, His betrothed spouse, the Lord will not suffer to be taken by another.

III.—THE SCHISMATIC.

The third form in which Satan works his guileful purpose of plucking away the word of God, is by dividing it into parts, and setting an especial value of some one tenet or doctrine; with which he doth so divert the silly and selfish mind, giving it

as a bone to occupy its teeth, while he steals away the precious store which the preacher is pouring out before it and committing to its charge. Then is Satan shewing himself as a sectarian in respect to the doctrine, and a rebel in respect to the discipline of the Church; concerning which I would further discourse to you, and by God's blessing set you on your guard against it. And I begin by warning your ear against his abuse of the very word "sectarian," with which he will persuade many of you that I am going to level my discourse against dissenters from Established Churches, who are generally known by that name sectarian, and of whom too many deserve it, as indeed do many of those who belong to the Established Churches. But, believe me, I have a far higher aim, as I trust I shall evince in the sequel: and in the meantime, if you cannot trust the preacher of God's word, then believe Satan's suggestion, and even now yield yourselves to him and let this discourse be another witness against you.

By sectarian, I mean one who hath taken up with a part of the Divine word, and resolveth within himself that it is the whole of it, and that whatever passes beyond or diverges from this his well-shapen pattern, must be error, and not for a moment to be believed. To which temptation of Satan we all lie so open, and are so naturally inclined, that I wonder not so much that Satan hath so easy a prey of us, as that we are not upon our guard against him. Its plentiful occasion ariseth in our selfish hearts, and conceited minds, and ambitious wills, which would fain set each man up as the rule of right unto himself and the measure of right unto others. Whereas the word of God is large, liberal, and perfect truth, universal charity, and submission of the will unto the will of our Father which is in heaven. And therefore it hath no less a purpose than to bring men's minds into union with Christ, the common reason; men's hearts into communion with the Spirit, the common love; and their wills into harmony with the eternal will of our heavenly Father: and so to bring about universal peace and concord upon the earth, and to establish that form of blessed society which is called the Church. But this, it is manifest, can only be accomplished by the common consent of our souls to be instructed, taught, and disciplined in all

things by the word of God. Renunciation of selfishness lies at the root of it; abstinence from pride and vanity; the viewing of our gifts as a stewardship, of our condition as an election of the Lord for the purposes of His own glory; the forsaking of all in order to be Christ's disciple, the loving of our neighbour as ourself, the sitting down as children at His feet to hear, the cutting off the right hand and plucking out the right eye at His command, the spending and being spent for His sake, and whatever else is most willing and devoted to Him who died for us and rose again. And not only so, but a perfect contentment with that condition to which it may please Him to advance us; whether to keep the door or to sit upon the throne of His house; whether as one of the dishonourable or honourable vessels thereof; whether servants of many or of few talents in the administration; whether in the body we be active hands, or humble burden-bearing feet, guiding eyes, or watchful ears. For the Church is not a republic, as they say the co-fraternity of letters is, but a various community, in which are masters and servants and slaves, parents and children, husbands and wives, and every other relationship of life which existeth in the world; yet so existing in the Church as to be devoid of pride, envy, malice, hypocrisy, and division; but all exercising the various gifts and graces of God's Spirit for the fulfilment of their various offices: so as to be bound and compacted together by the need of mutual help, as well as by the fond desire and ever-present ability to be helpful to one another.

Now, he is not a sectarian, but a true catholic Christian, who hath submitted himself as a child to the teaching of Christ Jesus, being born again of the Holy Spirit; and hath and doth desire the sincere milk of the word, that he may grow thereby into the full stature of a perfect man in Christ Jesus; and who, the more he attains, the more he desireth to attain; never resting, as if he had attained, or were already perfect, but pressing onward to the mark for the prize of his high calling in Christ Jesus. He is not a sectarian, but a catholic Christian, who grows more perfect, by growing more convinced of his own natural sinfulness and alienation from the love of God; more meek and gentle before the Lord and

all men; more patient of the sins and infirmities of his brethren, and more set against sin itself, whether present in his own members or the members of the Church. He, finally, is not a sectarian, but a catholic Christian, who loves the whole word of God, and yields himself to be moulded by it; gives it free course over his soul, to order and govern it; and seeks conformity with the image of God in Christ Jesus, ever praying to be made like unto the Son of God, and to be under the sweet influence of His blessed Spirit.

If you have caught the idea which I have given of a Christian who is not sectarian, you will easily perceive how great an attainment it is, and how sweet an inclination it must give to the preacher's voice; what a readiness to receive his word of doctrine, reproof, correction, or instruction in righteousness; and, on the other hand, it must be manifest to you how apt we must be, under the address of Satan, to take on partial forms of Christian character and adopt partial views of Christian truth, and so to become prejudiced against whatever opposeth, differeth from, or passeth beyond, that which we have set our heart upon to call it perfect and right and wanting nothing. For, first, our natural spirits are different—some generous, others just, and others selfish; some heroical, others moderate, and others mean; some grave, others gay; some enthusiastic, others slow; some fiery, others mild;—and these varieties of man will be apt to feed upon that part of the holy word which is congenial to them: the generous seizing upon those parts which hold forth God's universal bounty, the just apprehending those which manifest His holiness, and the selfish delighting in those which set forth His special love unto His own peculiar people; the heroical applying itself to the noble and exalted in character and sentiment, the sublime in action, the terrible in word, and the undaunted in suffering, which are to be found written of and by God's exalted servants; the mean-spirited, plodding even amongst the household duties and daily offices, the proverbs and counsels, and prudent admonitions of the Holy Scriptures; the grave turning self-denial into mortification, and duty into correction, substituting moroseness for seriousness and a downcast countenance for a humble heart; the gay catching at all the contentment and

peace and joy which belong to the divine and renewed nature, in order to feed its own inclination therewith;—and so on, through the various spirits of which men are found to be naturally possessed, each will be apt to look into the word of God, and convert to its own colour all upon which it fastens; and for the rest, pass them slightingly by, and at length forget that they are there.

Now, this being a matter of which I have meditated much, and am well assured, I make bold to say, that Satan, having enamoured every man of that type and form of spirit which peculiarly belongs to himself, doth use the Scriptures to foster and increase the same, and vex it the more with every other form of our evil and corrupt nature. And when he hath succeeded, he hath made that man worse than before, having in a manner sanctified all the predilections of the flesh and the mind, and confirmed them by the belief of a Divine sanction; so that he thinketh God is of him and with him, of no one and with no one who differs from him. Whence cometh that violence between sects in all ages of the Church, whereby Christ is blasphemed of the world, and Satan twice honoured of the professing Church: to guard against which nothing availeth, but our necessity of being taught of the Holy Spirit in the Divine word, and not taught of our own natural spirit; the former leading to community, the latter to distraction and difference. For though there be a unity and consent in the natural understandings, and also in the natural hearts of men—for God hath formed our hearts alike—yet our entire preference of self doth so warp us from that point of communion, and Satan doth so aggravate our several interests, that truly we never come into true union with one another by this natural means. And, therefore, there is no such fertile source of sectarianism, as setting man to study by the light of his own understanding the word of God, and to compose out of it a system of truth for himself, and a system of character for himself; which is the rage of this day amongst us Protestants. Each man will read the Bible for himself, having a hearty contempt for creeds and confessions and orthodoxy. And fine work they make of it! And they call themselves Bible Christians! Which men I have found so self-opinioned, so

prejudiced against the most venerable forms of the Church, so mighty in their own conceit, and so fond of innovation, that I have got an instinct of abhorrence towards them, and would rather hope to have communion with a superstitious church-ridden Papist, than with one of these self-instructed, self-guided Bible Christians, as they are wont to call themselves, in their high contempt for all who have any reverence for the authority of the Church. They are exactly in religion, what your weaver statesman and shoemaker political economist are in civil affairs. Whereof the cure is, not to submit with slavish deference to the Church's authority, but with the guidance of the orthodox creed, as the common sense of the Church, to search the Scriptures, praying continually the Holy Spirit to lead you out of the infinite mazes and perplexities of your own deceitful and deceivable heart, into the open and plain and enlightened and peaceful paths of catholic truth and perfect righteousness.

And if, from this one cause of difference, in the divers spirits we are of, so much sectarianism doth arise, what must it be, think you, when all the causes are taken into account—as, for example, the diversity of our birthplace in the climates of the world of mind, and the variety of the regions in the atmosphere of knowledge and feeling under which we were trained; some amongst the peasantry, others amongst the gentry, and others amongst the nobility; some in the city, and others in the country; some in refinement, others in vulgarity; some in loyalty, others in radicalism; some in bigotry, others in liberality; every one from his father and mother inheriting, and from his playmates and fellows deriving, a different groundwork of knowledge and feeling? Take further into account the different professions we are of; some contemplative, others active; some handicraft, others commercial, others political, others legal, and others divine; some looking always upon one form of men and things, others looking upon a constant variety. Take further into account our diverse education at school, and by after study and reading. Above all, take into account the different divisions of the Church into which we have been baptized, and in the bosom of which we have been reared up, with a thousand other things, which time

would fail me even to enumerate; and you will perceive the infinitely varied means everywhere strewed around, which Satan hath to avail himself of for the evil purpose of begetting in us a sectarian disposition, which shall be fond of a particular part of the word of God, and utterly nauseate and reject all the other parts.

The last mentioned amongst these the fruitful causes of sectarianism is of too great importance, and in too frequent use with Satan, to be slightly passed over amongst the rest, of whose powerful influence it is the manifestation and continuance in the midst of us: I mean, the number of our sects, which is our shame; for the Christian Church was intended to be one: and of which the evil is, that we are all so full of our own peculiarities, and so nourish them in secret, if for certain ostensible ends we be forced to hide them in public, that it is hardly possible for any one born in their bosom not to be reared up with a great pride and favour for this which is our shame. They have each their periodical publication; they have each their famed preachers; they have each their great society and their favourite schemes, upon which they talk until they have hampered within the pinfold of their sect, it may be of their conventicle, that spirit which ought to have been expanded into the full form of orthodox truth, and ripened into the fulness of catholic love, which ought to find its kindred and communion everywhere in the Christian Church. One is trained in the maxim that all Established Churches are evil in principle, and only tolerated by Heaven's merciful eye; others are trained into the notion that all creeds are impositions of ambitious Churchmen, and restraints of Christian liberty; others are possessed with the notion that infant baptism is a vile superstition, and not to be defended upon any ground of Scripture, history, or common sense; others, again, are taught that ordination is of no avail unless by the hands of a bishop, and that all others are intruders into the vineyard. And the impurity of all other communions is spoken of as if their own certainly were pure. And so on I might proceed through a thousand prejudices and fallacies, which the great theological ignorance of the times puts into circulation, and keeps in circulation, to the imprisonment of many souls, and to the pre-

judice of almost all. It is not to be told what obstacles these things are to the divine discourse of reason and the spiritual charity of the soul. I have often spent a whole night in vain attempts to pass the barriers of these prejudices, which will make professing Christians uncivil and even rude to one another. ..

And it is not to be told what a hindrance this is to the preaching of the word. One will not have a moral duty inculcated, another will not hear a prophecy explained; one is impatient of instruction, and will rise and go away if you do not excite his feelings, which excitement another decries as enthusiasm; another cannot receive the matter if it be read, and another dislikes that it should be spoken. You may not tell masters their duties lest ye should offend them; and if you preach of duties to rulers, you are political; and if you shew the errors of the times, you are setting yourself up for a judge of others; and if you bring forth former times in the experience of the Church, you go beyond the knowledge of the people; and unless you harp upon every man's single string, you do not preach Christ. These things I do not imagine, but have sadly experienced, to my own personal wounding; yea, even, to what I trust is far dearer to me—to the wounding of the truth and honour of Christ.

This was Satan's device against the Corinthian church, as we read in the First Epistle to the Corinthians: "Ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying and strife and divisions; are ye not carnal and walk as men? For while one saith I am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollos, are ye not carnal?" Let no one, therefore, ignorantly say that these dissensions in the visible Church of Christ are good. They may be, and doubtless are, overruled for good; but in themselves they are evil, flowing from the evil fountain of our malignant and carnal minds, and perpetuating that natural enmity from which they spring. And again; "There are contentions among you. Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized into the name of Paul?" This same spirit was found in the Church in the wilderness, when Core and his company rose against Moses and Aaron, and would

dispute the authority in the congregation which God's ministers had received from the Lord; and the earth opened her mouth and swallowed them quick. And Satan will ever continue to reveal himself as a maker of divisions in the body of Christ, to mar its beauty and to destroy its health; of which, not only the apostles but also the Reformers were fully aware, who were at pains to guard themselves from the inroad of sectarianism, shewing their faith to be after the primitive Church, and protesting only against the errors with which it had been overlaid. But it is not to be denied, that Satan, when he could not enter among them as a heretic, entered as a sectarian; yet not at the first, for in the beginning the Reformed Churches enjoyed much unity of spirit, though they differed in their outward order according to the convenience and judgment of their various countries and nations. But soon Satan introduced into some a spirit of power and authority and tyranny over the conscience, which excited in others a spirit of wrath and obstinate resistance, whence arose dissension and separation, and the formation of distinct parties, from which time the faith of men declined into controversy, and their love cooled into indifference, and even bitterness, one towards another, until Satan hath prevailed so far as to establish dissent into a great principle in men's minds, which seems now like a mighty tree, to overshadow the whole spiritual field of Nonconformity, and to bring into dwarfish and puny state all its productions. There is a fiery spirit diffused abroad against the sentiments and the very persons of those who belong to those Churches which were the instruments in God's hand of reforming the faith of these lands, and introducing amongst us that light and liberty which so many are disposed to use against them. Which spirit the Lord hath greatly rebuked by shewing Himself favourable to His former handmaidens, returning to them again, and quickening in them repentance and love and new obedience, to the great confusion of all who love not their prosperity.

I know, brethren, how unsavoury and unpalatable these truths are to many who may have drunk deep into that sectarian spirit which I reprove; but I cannot suffer myself to be overawed with any fear, or seduced by my own facility

of nature, that I should not sharply rebuke this evil spirit, which fights so strenuously and so successfully with the Spirit of Christ Jesus whom we preach, and you profess to obey. When discoursing upon the preceding topic of Satan as a self-righteous formalist, I did not hesitate to warn all those of you who had been brought up in the Established Churches against his arts, shewing you how you were specially prone to that temptation; and now, wherefore should I hesitate through any fear of being thought illiberal, (which word, I think, hath almost changed its character,) from warning such of you as have been born and brought up among the various denominations of Dissenters, from Satan's arts as a sectarian? For certainly as those reared in the Established Churches are wont to reject the word faithfully preached in them, through a reliance upon their orthodox opinions and regular services; so are those reared in the narrow schools of Dissent, most disinclined to receive the word from any other mouth, or in any other style, or in any other place, than those to which they have been accustomed to attach their reverence as alone just and righteous in the sight of God. And the reason why Satan should have such easy access under this disguise into their fold is obvious: because they or their fathers have taken up an opposite position from the Church, for the sake of some principle which they deemed a sufficient reason for so doing; holding in all other respects the same doctrine of faith, and discipline of a holy life. The danger, therefore, is imminent, that they should brood over that singular or those several exceptions they have taken, as being the cause and occasion of their separation; whence it will come to take an undue importance in their minds, and bring them into a state of animosity towards those for whom they should feel the love of brethren. This was what the Reformers and Nonconformists were afraid of, and therefore they were so reluctant to be torn away from the Church; but now, through the long habit of nourishing this spirit of separation instead of the spirit of community, a new principle hath been engendered, which I regard as Satan's spell upon the spirit of our dissenting brethren; namely, that it is a right godly thing for every disciple of Jesus to dissent from a Church

because it is established by authority, without respect to any other ground or consideration whatever. Wherefore they have taken to themselves a name which is the very antagonist of the communion of saints; namely, "the dissenting interest." This is the spell by which Satan holds such multitudes of them chained in utter darkness or in twilight; as the spell by which he binds the Churchman is, "that there is no salvation out of the Church:" and so he hath a plentiful harvest from both sides of the fence, merely by changing his dress, when he goes to reap souls for his garner of destruction.

Now, brethren, the cure and remedy of all this, and the defeat of Satan under this disguise, is, to labour after the spirit of communion, to hunger and thirst for agreement, to desire peace and to ensue it. To surrender our own selfishness, our predilections for a party, and to seek the bowels of love towards all who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity and truth. We ought to open our minds to light as the day, and be easy of conviction as the blushing child. We ought to know the person of Christ, to desire His image, to look unto Him, and to imitate Him alone. Yea, not even Paul, nor Cephas, nor Apollos, but Christ alone. We ought to spread our spirits abroad over the whole compass of God's precious word, and from every plant thereof gather the milk and honey of our spiritual life. Not delighting ourselves with the Epistles in particular, or with the Gospels in particular, or with the Psalms, or with the Prophets, for there is no such sign of a confirmed sectarian as to have wedded himself to particular fragments of God's word; even as there is no such sign of a catholic Christian as to love it equally, and delight in it all, as revealing to him that one truth of God which is life unto his soul. And always we ought to remember the diversity of gifts which God hath appointed to the diverse members of His body, not making the body all eye, or all hands, or all feet, but placing a diversity of offices in His Church for the profit of the whole. Above all, we ought to set ourselves at our proper lowness in the Church, desiring to be a servant of servants to the saints, and confessing our unworthiness to keep a door in His house, too humble to take upon ourselves the office of judging others, infinitely removed from the usurpation of making ourselves a standard to others,

but as we desire ourselves to be conformed, so desiring to see all others conformed unto Christ.

Oh that ye would look unto Christ as your Saviour, as your teacher by the Holy Spirit, as your pattern in all things! Then would you be very open to the word of truth in all its variety and compass of application, and very desirous of finding the living resemblances of His holiness, unwearied in your prayers to be possessed of His likeness, unwearied in your love of those who were pursuing the same great end, in whatever external communion they were found. Thus only is Satan to be defeated as a sectarian, by perceiving the utter unprofitableness for salvation of the outward visible Church in any form, and the necessity of being of that spiritual and invisible Church, whereof I have lately taught you what be the sure and everlasting foundations. But if you set store by these outward forms which are only an emblem and representation before the world of the spiritual things, then it will come to pass that the spiritual things themselves will escape your observation, and ye will become a prey to Satan arrayed as a sectarian.

Thus, brethren, have I set before you Satan's third artifice to pluck away the seed of the word, which the preacher soweth in your heart; and I solemnly warn you of it as that to which, of all others, you who hear the word from my lips are liable. For it hath been so ordered in the providence of God, that we should be gathered from all communions, both of the Churches Established, and of those departing from them; and therefore we never shall be able to come into sweet fellowship with one another, or a ready consent unto the word of the preacher, but by great watchfulness against the several peculiarities in which we have been reared up. Therefore I do earnestly entreat you, not to be conformed to any rule of man's invention, to any idea of early education, but like wise men to judge all things, and hold fast that which is good. And, for my own part, while I fulfil all things according to the rules and doctrines of the Church which hath honoured me with the ministerial calling, I feel that I am not restrained thereby from fulfilling the perfect office of a preacher of the word, and of a Christian pastor to the souls of

all the people. But go not to allow any bugbear of an Established Church, or any prejudice which artful men may disseminate against the doctrine, discipline, or government thereof, to hinder you from receiving the word at my lips with that confidence and love which is necessary to its producing of fruit. Go not to lie in wait for faults, go not to sit in critical judgment, go not to measure the compass of Christian doctrine by your present ignorance, as if you were masters over the ministry, and as if your mind and reason were the proper measure of the contents of Christ's word. Ye are occupied with the world, and it is not reason that ye should be able to discern the deep mysteries of the word of God, over which we are appointed the stewards. It is my part and province, and the chief use I am of in the world, and that for which you have called me, to search the Scriptures diligently, and meditate them carefully, and to bring forth from them the lessons of doctrine, correction, reproof, and instruction in righteousness, for which they were inspired of God. Now, it is by every one submitting himself to this word, that every one is to be taught in the one truth, and conformed to the one image of Christ Jesus. And if you think me not enough instructed myself in the ways of godliness, nor careful enough of the spirit of communion and love, I do entreat you to pray earnestly in my behalf, that everything personal, everything prejudiced, everything narrow and sectarian, may be done away with, and that I may be a vessel sanctified unto honour, and altogether filled by God with the living waters of the Spirit for your sakes. Even as I do now pray and entreat the Lord for every one of you, that you may be delivered from the pride of intellect, and the self-sufficiency of reason, from the powers of prejudice, and the desires of power, from vanity and ostentation, and hardness of heart, and malice and all unrighteousness, in order that ye may receive the engrafted word in the love of it, to the salvation of your souls: which word I do now, as always, declare unto you, that Jesus Christ is the perfect wisdom of God, which must fill our minds by the banishment and exclusion of our personal peculiarities, that the new man within us is His child, begotten of His Spirit, nourished by the sincere milk of His word, and

conformed in all things to His image. That this child of Jesus is the same in all men, and where He is there is love and peace and blessedness. And that the Church is the society of such children of the Spirit of Christ; and that the minister of the Church is the nurse of these children, the shepherd of this flock of Christ whom He hath purchased with His own blood. And that this new man of the heart is greedy of Divine instruction, is happy to hear sin reproved, desireth to see it extinguished, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, doth not behave itself unseemly, is not easily puffed up, but patient, meek, gentle, merciful, and full of good fruits. He hath no kindred with sectarianism; for though yet a child, and able to embrace a part, he hath the love and presentiment of the whole, and delighteth in nothing so much as in one who can instruct him more perfectly in the way of Christ, and bring him more exactly to the image of God, created in righteousness and true holiness.

And now I proceed, in the last place, to point out Satan's fourth artifice against the hearers of the word; which is to deny that which is of the holy and true faith revealed unto us by Jesus Christ.

IV.—THE HERETIC.

Though it be said, as the characteristic of the first class of the hearers of the word, concerning whom we discourse, that they hear, then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, you are not therefore to suppose that every time they hear the word, they have a distinct perceptible act of the evil one, invalidating it by his accusations; for Satan is not such a novice as to be always doing the same thing over again, but doth consolidate his work as it proceedeth, and builds up prejudices and antipathies and forms of error, which, like strong entrenchments, may fortify the heart of the hearer against the assaults of the word, nor resteth he satisfied until he gets his man beyond the range of the preacher's voice, leading him utterly to despise Christ's royal ordinance of preaching. Which artifice of placing the soul, as it were, word-proof, he doth exercise in a fourfold way:—1. By deadening the

spiritual capacities through much sensual and material and physical studies, or occupations, in which case he presenteth himself as the prince of the kingdoms of the natural world, and overchargeth the carnal man with such a surfeit of care and conceit, that it never dreameth it hath a spirit to be spoken to. This is the drugging of the soul under which our self-sufficient, God-despising infidels labour.—2. When these doses of outward knowledge and pleasure will not keep his man from looking homeward, he artfully insinuateth flatteries of his excellent parts of nature; as his honesty, moral worth, and excellent character, and slily converting himself into an angel of light, doth find texts of Scripture to commend the same, and he presenteth to him the law as the rule of a good life, and turneth the gospel creed into a make-weight to balance the unequal scale of his merits, and so juggles the great body of professing Christians out of their faith, and maketh them deaf to the word of gospel-preaching.—3. With whom this natural Christianity will not answer his end, he dealeth by sectarianism, to enamour them of some favourite doctrine, theme, and manner of preaching, with which he sleekly serveth their selfishness, until he hath got them blown into the big and swollen Churchman, or shrivelled up within the light purse-strings of the sect or conventicle, whom then he rideth with an easy bridle; and they would say of Christ himself, if He were preaching to them, "Have any of the Pharisees believed on Him?"

But, brethren, this is not all, as you may well conceive. Satan owes Christ, who came to destroy his works and cast him out of the earth, too great a grudge, to be contented with these three defensive methods of warfare against the word; and he hath too many zealous servants in the world, not to be able to muster a head and front of direct opposition and hearty warfare against the truth as it is in Jesus; men who shall corrupt it, and reject for false its plainest doctrines, and for truth set forth the most spurious and false corruptions of the Divine testimonies. This I regard as Satan's fourth art to invalidate the word; and he worketh it upon a very large scale. Into which I would now inquire, putting the people upon their guard.

Very early in the Christian Church, so early as the time of the apostles, he wrought the engine of heresy against the truth, as we read of some who brought in "damnable heresies," to meet which the apostles and their descendants in the Church were wont to set down a form of words, containing the very truth; of which John hath given one in his first Epistle: "Hereby know ye the Spirit of God. Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God." According as new heresies arose by the craft of Satan, clauses were added to the creed, and it grew at length to that symbol of faith which is commonly called the Apostles' Creed. In process of time, when that heresy of heresies, the Arian heresy, which striketh at the root by denying our Lord's divinity, overspread the west, and carried everything like a tide through the sweeping violence of the barbarous nations, the Lord interposed for His Church; and the Nicene Creed was drawn up, embodying the orthodox opinion of the Church in respect to that question, and at the same time the Athanasian Creed came into being, Athanasius being the great opposer of Arius. Thus the body of orthodox doctrine acquired greater dilatation and distinctness, in proportion to the variety of heresies which were broached. Especially in defence against the Pelagian heresy, which was the Arminianism of those early ages. By and by, when the mystery of iniquity began to manifest itself in the Church, and Satan to obtain the supremacy of the Church, he proceeded to disguise orthodoxy under such deep veils that the truth became utterly hidden, and the falsehood which was presented before the scenes possessed the faith of all, or almost all. When the Reformers arose in the spirit of primitive times, with more than primitive intellect, to enable them to combat with the growing intellect of man, and with great care and patience embodied the orthodox doctrine of the Church of Christ in various forms, then arose the Arminian heresy; and in a full synod, whereat divines both from the north and south of this island assisted, the truth was declared against them. And afterwards in the Assembly of Westminster, another code of orthodox doctrine was drawn up, from which we have our two most excellent Catechisms and Confession of Faith. Now, it is perhaps the most marvellous of all things, and doth denote

what unity there is in the faith of the true Church of Christ, that from the Apostles' Creed to the Westminster Confession, there is a perfect harmony on all the great points of Christian doctrine, concerning the offices of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, in the salvation of sinful men.

And concerning the weight and value which should be given to this body of Christian interpretation, we have this much to say, that a wise and a good man will pause long before he contradict any portion of it. While he doth not surrender to it any absolute power over his faith, which were to do great dishonour to the word of God, and to the Holy Spirit, the only infallible interpreter of the word, he will hold it as a noble testimony of the great cloud of Christian witnesses, for which they have given their blood to be poured out like water. Whatever is venerable in antiquity, and most excellent in human opinion, whatever is sacred in suffering for conscience' sake, and most authoritative in the common consent of the best of all countries and ages, is most properly and fairly due, and most faithfully to be rendered, to the orthodox faith of the Christian Church. Common sense, which there is no man but defers to in a high degree, is a mutable and ambiguous voice compared with this universal sense of the faithful in Christ Jesus. The customs of our country, and its constitutions of law and government, before the representatives of which every man uncovers his head in token of his high regard, have neither had such long establishment, such persevering firmness and indubitable testimony, nor such sanctifying oblations of blood, as this the hereditary truth and commonwealth of Christendom, for every article of which whole hecatombs of martyrs have been offered up. Waving, therefore, all considerations of a more sacred kind, and steering by the rule and compass of ordinary things, the man who holds not the orthodox opinions of the Church in reverence doth either declare his total ignorance of the number, and weight, and value of the witnesses which have testified for it unto the death, and lived in the strength of it holy and blameless lives; or he doth declare his own overweening confidence in himself, and

in the petty sanction of men like himself, whose interpretations he setteth up on the other hand. Oh, there may be many of us Protestants who, in our zeal against the Papal errors, of which, perhaps, the greatest is the infallibility of the Church, do little justice to the great ideas of which these false doctrines were the perversion, and are little on our guard against the opposite extreme, which, if once fairly embraced, is the more dangerous of the two; the Papal extreme being too much faith, and the opposite extreme no faith at all, or the least possible. Of which, the danger to which we are liable, you will perceive the imminency and extent, if you will but consider with what an incessant hue and cry the people are baited on by our popular preachers to go to the Scriptures and make up opinions for themselves, while at the same time they sedulously set them loose from all respect, or reverence, or even knowledge of the orthodox creed of the Church. And the very name of orthodoxy is sneered at. Methinks that England might be a little instructed in this matter by the infinitude of heresies which she hath broached during the last century, and the infinitude of sects which prevail, and the contempt into which they have brought the royal ordinance of preaching. In our country we manage it wholly otherwise. Being trained from childhood in the orthodox creed of the Church, yet having everything therein proved from Scripture, we are delivered from the wildness of our own heated brains and transient impressions; and may indeed fall into a security of mere orthodoxy, but are not liable to that temptation of broaching private interpretations and peculiar doctrines, whereby the faith of many might be perverted: and so it hath come to pass that no form of the Arian heresy hath been able to live amongst us; and the Arminian heresy, which hath caught both extremes of the Church in this land, the most educated and the most ignorant, the High Church and the Methodists, hath never shewn open face, however much it may be preferred in secret, as it always must be by the worldly part of the clergy and the people. Indeed, I may say that by the people, and also by the clergy, it hath been uniformly rejected; and all the organisation of the Wesleyan

system hath not been able to make any impression upon the phalanx of knowledge and understanding which such a spiritual education hath constituted in our land.

And if you, who have been trained in those schools where orthodox doctrine is made light of, will but give me ear for a moment, I will shew you how open you throw yourself to the temptation of Satan, by the slighting of that which every good man should revere. What is a man? Not certainly an infallible thinker of truth; not certainly a pure conceiver of righteousness; or a harmonious organ of all just opinions. What is that mind which you bring to the perusal of the Holy Scriptures? Not a *tabula rasa*, a sheet of fair and virgin purity, whereon the Holy Ghost may write the good pleasure of God. Not an encyclopædia of knowledge, to perceive the taste and touch of past times and opinions which are in every part of the word of God, and to make the exact allowance for the same, in order to have the very form of the unchangeable truth. Or are you, the members of Christ, who all the day long are labouring in secular affairs; or are you, the ministers of Christ, who haply are all day long labouring in affairs only a shade less secular; able, without any help or guidance, to guard yourselves from applying the opinions, tastes, humours, prejudices, errors, whereof we are every one of us by nature but a congeries or bundle, from influencing you while meditating the word of God? Nay, but I ask, why do you hear a minister at all, or set one apart to the word and to prayer, if in yourselves you be so gifted? And why have you paraphrastic psalms; why have you the strains of God's prophetic men framed and fashioned to the times; why doat you on your popular preachers and popular speakers, if so be the word of God is your all in all? And if you admit any help or counsellor, whether do you think it is better to have one speaking at random his own crude and undigested opinions, or to have one speaking under the authority of the Church, and with a reverence for what hath been said by the holy men of God in the times of old? Come, my Bible-proud brother, let me tell thee a secret into thine own ear, as it were heard only by thyself: because thou settest no store by the constantly-received opinion of Christ's Church, I dread thou art

an ignorant novice, or a self-conceited bigot; and that, if thou take not heed, Satan will make thee an incorrigible heretic.

For that Satan steals upon us under the pretence of seeking God for ourselves, and judging for ourselves, and casting off all authority, as he did upon our first parents, wishing to make them gods at a stroke and without God's wiser discipline, you may well perceive by the crowds of upstart novices, rash and heady fools, ignorant declaimers, and political innovators, whom he gets to take the lead in all those heretical or free-thinking clubs which start up and sink down in this troublous pool of wild and lawless thought; every one of whom you shall find with some such word in their mouth as thine: "We think for ourselves;" "We are inquirers after truth;" "We take nothing upon report;" "We follow right reason; and we believe the word of God, trying it by our reason." Then, to see what a trap Satan had caught them in, go to their meetings, and I will be bound to say you shall be entertained all the night long with violent declamations, confirmed prejudices, boiling rage, and bitter spite, against everything which hath the sanction of venerable names in past or present times, or which is upheld by establishment or authority of any kind. And these are your seekers and lovers of truth, and patient expectants of "the wisdom that is from above, which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy!" Therefore ye ought to be on your guard against these popular traps of Satan; and be jealous of yourselves, lest, by casting you loose from venerable authority, he plunges you at length into some of the same passionate excesses, obstinate prejudices, and natural predilections of your mind.

Believe me, however different it may be in the quiet and restful country, where Satan appropriates another disguise suited to men's more easy condition, that in this city of seething and fermenting novelties, where nothing in heaven above or earth beneath is sacred from the daring blasphemy of every speaker and the published profanity of every scribbler, and where the Scriptures are wrested by every uncommissioned, unordained upstart, to his own fancy, the true wisdom is to study the Scriptures with a careful respect and great reverence

for the one faith which all sound divines and orthodox Churches have maintained: and while you yield not one point of saving doctrine to their judgment, but wait the conviction of the Holy Ghost, that you still preserve, as it were in the outer court of the temple, these *dicta* and *dogmata* of holy men, in order to keep out the suggestions of your own selfish and peculiar mind, the floating leaves of popular opinions and the novelties of the day, which are ever dunning for admission. For surely a man must be possessed with the fulness of something before he is possessed with the wisdom of the Spirit; and the wisdom of the wise in all ages is certainly more worthy of a place, than the frothy and filthy exhalations of newspapers, magazines, and reviews: and of those Scriptures which the Spirit hath not yet interpreted to him, it is better surely to hold fast the interpretation of the communion of saints, than to have no interpretation at all, or that which floats too often in empty sound and volubility of idle words around the walls and roofs of our places of worship. For I am not ashamed to say—because I include myself in the accusation—that this is an age in which the preaching of the gospel and exposition of the Scriptures should blush and hide its head. Which if you will not believe, take up the best book of modern preaching, and take up any at random written in the times of the Reformation and of Puritanism, and ye will see the difference, if ye be not fallen with the times; which I think is the case, for the people now lead the ministry, not the ministry the people, according to the golden order of public opinion, that image upon the plain of Dura which the god of this world hath set up in our times, and commanded all men to worship.

Do bear with and give heed to me; for though I be troubled and sore vexed in my spirit, by the great prevalency of Satan's power amongst us, these are words of truth and soberness which I indite for your advancement and growth in grace. I have suffered so much in the health and strength of my own soul, from the spirit of hasty innovation and self-sufficient private judgment, which worketh disunion and division; and have found it so difficult to recover the sweetness and holiness of the spirit of communion; and I do perceive so many harassed by the same temptation of

Satan, and labouring against it—and, alas! so many yielding to it—that, as I said, I am troubled and much vexed in my soul, while I declare what is the sober and solid truth. I do see the temple, which is the Church of Christ, so filled with those who, under covert of holiness, are pursuing the commerce of their natural inclinations and opinions, that a zeal ariseth within me, which I hope is not averse from the spirit of Him who heretofore made a whip of small cords and scourged out of the temple the money-changers and those who sold doves and made it a house of merchandise and a den of thieves.

Now, the counsel which I give to every one who is conscious to himself of such trials of Satan, is, to doubt every interpretation which is original or novel: not to resist the interpretation which the Spirit of truth may suggest, but to doubt, lest it may be suggested by the spirit of our own mind; and to put it upon quarantine before we make any commerce of it with others. And this is best done by comparing it with other parts of Scripture, and seeing whether it be coherent with the whole: if it stand this test, then to compare it with the opinions of the Church; for almost every opinion possible to be drawn out of the Scripture hath either been adopted or rejected by the Church. Wherefore I have never ceased to declare, that, for this and other ends, an acquaintance with the history of the Church is a most profitable thing for every Christian; now that we have it written in our tongue by so excellent a man as Joseph Milner. I say not but the Church hath rejected very valuable ideas: witness that of the second coming of Christ before the millennium, which was held by the primitive Church for four centuries, and, though never abjured, silently died away, by reason of the wicked incrustations with which Satan had artfully disguised it. And so it is with every other doctrine which hath in it any pith or marrow for spiritual guidance: witness at this day the Calvinistic doctrines, which by the Reformers and Puritans were the marrow of divinity, and which they knew how to interpret in their true spiritual force, but which now-a-days Satan hath got so disguised with base intermixtures—such as the doctrine of necessity, the doctrine of God's propriety in us as man hath property in an estate, the Antinomian doctrine of no law to the elect—

that really we are upon the point of throwing away, if we have not thrown away, those great heads of spiritual divinity, as either unintelligible or highly injurious. And methinks that the poor dispirited relic of the great and noble army of worthies who heretofore contended for these truths, fight desperately, and with the heat of partisans, rather than with the cool and noble confidence of those who are contending for the faith as it was once delivered to the saints. But Satan's master-stroke is always aimed against the citadel, the rocky Capitol and holy Mount Zion of our city—namely, the divinity of Christ—well knowing that, if he can strike that down, the gates of hell will prevail against the Church. And I grieve, I very much grieve at my heart, to see the havoc he hath made of the Christian Church under this disguise. The success of Arianism, when first it floated down on the Church upon the flood of barbarous nations, was not more great and fearful, than, in the Protestant Churches upon the Continent, it hath been during this last century, so idolised for the diffusion of knowledge and liberal opinions;—yea, and such knowledge and liberality as public opinion maketh present account of, can only have its spring-tide and overflowing fulness by the forcing out of that heavenly knowledge, and the bearing down of those fixed principles, which come from the faith of Christ Jesus as "the way, the truth, and the life," the Prophet, the Priest, and the King of men. And upon this tenet of His divinity, every other tenet, of His infallibility to teach, His sufficiency to save, His power to rule and defend, do simply and entirely rest. For if He be man sent to teach man, then He is but a higher sort of Socrates and Plato, whom we may refuse or adopt for our schoolmaster as it seemeth to us best. And if He be but a created spirit, however high, with a commission to do a certain office for men, then He seemeth to me separated from our sympathies more than before, and to be no longer in office: and if He is out of office, then He hath no more concern with us, or we with Him, than that of thankfulness for what He hath done. And so you have the office of His present intercession and atonement, and of His fulness of royalty, wholly abolished; and His prophetic office also. For do you not observe how they undo the authority of His lessons by degrees, until they have brought

Him, prophet, angel, or whatever they feign Him to be, under the authority of human reason, which useth the word as seemeth to it convenient, and setteth it aside when it is not convenient? And truly the whole of religion is a job of conveniency, unless the sanction of the written word, as the prophecy of everlasting truth, be, that He who uttered it is very God, the present Head of the Church, and "Prince of the kings of the earth." Holding, as I do, that Satan, not God, presideth in the natural mind of man, I must have, not only a word, but a power and life in the word to beget another mind, which shall withstand the natural mind, and discern that spiritual and divine word, which the natural man may corrupt to his own and his master's purposes, of pride, vain-glory, and self-idolatry, under the name of true worship, but will never use to the honour and glory of that God whose arch-enemy he is, or to the salvation of that soul which he holdeth as the prey of his own destruction. Now, this doctrine of Christ's divinity, is not only positively resisted by the adversaries of His Church, but, alas! in His Church hath become, I fear, very dead and empty. The waters of life are hardly covering the soles of our feet. It is viewed as a dogma of which no one can render any account. They balance texts on both sides, and so leave it! But as the Lord liveth, it is the Alpha and Omega of Christian doctrine; the life of it: and if not present in every part of it, there is no spiritual nourishment therein. Christian doctrine is not twenty or a hundred truths, but it is one living truth; in every part of which there is life, and whereof Christ is the life of every part: "I am the way, the truth, and the life." So that Satan doth as good as murder the life of the written word, when he hath prevailed with men to doubt of, or to deny, the divinity of the living Word: and this, therefore, is his master-plot of subtlety, his arch-deception; wherein succeeding, he will permit you to hear the word where and from whom you please, being well assured that you are proof against its redeeming and regenerating power while you have no faith in Christ as the Eternal Word of God, who hath now become the Redeemer of sinners, and the Mediator of the fallen world.

Now, though I have done my endeavour in this lecture,

to put you upon your guard against Satan's temptations to substitute a false idea and scheme of Christian doctrine instead of the true one, by shewing you the right use of an orthodox faith, as the proper counterpoise to the peculiarities of our own day and generation, and, above all, of our own mind, in the study of the Holy Scriptures, be very careful to observe that I do only use it as a counterpoise to selfishness in the spiritual study and apprehension of the word, and by no means as a substitute for the spiritual interpretation of the word itself. It serves exactly the same purpose to a Christian in divine things, which the judgment of wise and good men doth to a wise and good man in those things which he hath not the time or the ability to examine for himself, and which the common sense and custom of the place they are born in serveth to all men. How few things are we able to examine to the bottom, or see in their first principles, which yet we adhere to, out of that faith we have in the opinion of our brethren; each man bringing his own share to the common stock of true opinion and righteous feeling! This is the community out of which all communities spring, the community of belief and sentiment; the mother of common customs, the mother of common laws; and the parent of it is God himself, who hath formed the minds and hearts of men alike. So likewise is it in the Church, which is the mother of saints and the community of the Holy Spirit; to whose words, especially those which she caused to be written as her faith, we defer with a great reverence; and to her customs also, until it be made manifest that they were rashly taken up, or gradually crept in through an evil influence, and, as it were, a side-wind of Satan. For it is a master-stroke of Satan when he can get the whole Church drifted into heresy: but this never is. The spiritual Church can never hold a vital error. The visible Church may; but the invisible Church cannot: and if you can find its testimony recorded, you shall always hear one sound of harmony from the beginning of time until this present day. And the Church doth owe to Joseph Milner, that humble saint, a great debt, in that he sought to thread out the history of the true Church, and gather together the fragments of her testimony. This notion, of every man examining every matter

for himself, is a poor, ignorant, self-conceited vagary, which Satan can palm only upon an exceedingly vain generation, but which he hath found this generation weak enough to adopt: whereby he hath loosed all reverence and dependence upon authority of every kind, and prepared men for jostling in wild confusion and strife, like the atoms of the primitive chaos. For what bindeth and knitteth men in social communities, and maketh them necessary to each other's well-being, but this very thing, that the one reposeth on the other for some help or ministry which he cannot accomplish for himself? This also binds generation with generation, and maketh men progressive. Examine for thyself! Thou preposterous fool! what is that thou eatest? "Bread." Hast thou analysed it, and proved it to be good? Go to, examine it: wouldst thou take thy daily food on trust, thou examiner and prover of all things? And thy drink! Dost thou know the composition of water and all liquors? And thy knowledge! young man. Dost thou know thy father or thy mother by memory? or hast thou it on trust? And thy actions! young man. Didst thou make the statutes and the customs? or hast thou proved them all by Paine's "Rights of Man?" And thy trade! young man. Didst thou invent all its tools, and discover anew all its methods of using them? or did thy master beat thee into it? And, at school, didst thou enter into learned debate with thy teacher, why that mark should sound A, rather than B; and his fellow B, rather than A? O thou naughty boy, what a fool they make of thee! what a conceited fool they do swell thee into, with this maxim of proving all things! "Ah, but religion; religion, sir, is another matter; and a man must not take that on trust, on any man's opinion." I grant thee thou must not; and therefore go to this night and begin thy study, but begin in a humble mood; for the first lesson of it is, that, of all enemies, thou hast most to guard against thine own deceitful heart. That natural man of thine is the stronghold of the enemy; therefore trust not to him. "To whom, then, shall I trust?" To thy Creator and thy Redeemer, and somewhat to every man who is by the Holy Ghost renewed in their image, and thyself when thou art so renewed. Fare thee well; and may the Lord bless thee in thy study of His word!

Thus having exposed these four methods and practices of the devil and his angels in plucking away the seed, let me collect the substance of what hath been said, and so conclude this lecture.

The object of this Parable of the Sower is to lay down the exact doctrine with respect to the preaching of the word; to teach those who preach what enemies they have to encounter, and to teach those who hear under what fearful apprehension of losing the good and blessed fruit they should still abide while hearing the word. The Lord knew that the foolishness of preaching was to be the chosen means of propagating the knowledge of the kingdom; and therefore in this, His first parable, He doth take order to warn both preachers and hearers against a threefold opposition,—the address of Satan, the incontinence of the heart, and the oppression of the world. Which three great enemies of the word—Satan, the heart, and the world—He not only expressly nameth, but briefly describeth the manner of their opposition. Satan exerteth himself to prevent the word from taking root; by all means endeavouring, like the ravenous and hungry birds, to pluck it away. The heart closeth with it, and rejoiceth in it, and deceiveth itself into the idea of loving it, until some temptation arriveth, that is, some new object of desire; whereupon it speedily casteth out the former. The world, with its load of cares and weight of weary occupation, oppresseth the seed, and choketh it, and as it were carrieth off the sap and nourishment with which it should be carried to perfection. And from these three enemies, the seed of the word of God and the sowers thereof are to expect the most active and successful opposition.

Now, forasmuch as Satan, the first and chiefest of these the enemies of the word, is wont to be made light of, his very name having become the most fertile subject of joke and raillery; under which merry disguise he the more easily winneth his wily ends; and because, in this age of slender faith, his very existence as a person hath come into question with many, and with very few is the extent of his evil agency apprehended; I have deemed it right to be the more express and particular in exposing to you the more ordinary forms

under which he applieth to your hearts, to hinder them from receiving and retaining the divine word. For it is his main art to pluck it away as fast as it falls, well knowing that it is mightier than he, and that he cannot withstand it if it should establish to itself a steadfast root; wherein he sheweth himself at once cowardly and cunning. And he doth well to be cowardly, who hath experienced the power of the Divine Word in the wilderness to dissolve, as by a spell, the three most artful and powerful temptations which he arrayed against the Son of man. And he knoweth that he hath his power upon earth only in virtue of that word of God which said, "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Which curse our Lord having borne, and preached the contrary word of "Salvation to all who believe," Satan knows that he hath no longer any secure place in men's hearts, or in the world's region, save by the ignorance and absence of the word: which he is therefore at so much pains to follow in the train of; and wherever it is preached he is busy, plucking away what grains he can catch, which is generally by far the greater part of the whole. For, in the hungry spring the birds do not more certainly scent the seed of the sower, and follow his footsteps to devour what they can, than doth Satan wait upon the ministry of the word in every assembly, to counteract by all means, and by all means to efface, every impression which might be made upon the soul. Which evil he worketh to the ministry of the word chiefly in four ways:—First, As the prince of the knowledge of the visible world, corrupting men out of the capacity of spiritual knowledge by their total absorption with things seen and temporal; which is the condition of infidelity, arising partly out of a materialised mind, partly out of drunken vanity or besotted sensuality; the condition quoted by our Lord in the parable: Eyes have they, but they see not God in creation or providence; ears, but they hear Him not in the word of the gospel; hearts, but they understand not the movements of the Spirit within them, and therefore cannot be converted or healed.—Secondly, As the god of the natural man, whose benevolence, justice, truth, reverence, and other naturally good qualities, he doth so commend, and, when need is, draw forth passages of Scripture to commend, that the poor

dupes believe themselves to be Christians; while they trust in their own works, and pay their worship to a god of their own imagination, calling him the God and Father of Jesus Christ, but who hath no feature of His holiness nor of His mercy, but is the ideal of a perfect natural man, that is, of Satan's most advanced and honoured servant. For Satan will allow his people to go any length in the way of natural acquirements, provided they speak not of redemption, or regeneration, or any new work of Divine power and grace in the heart; well knowing that the more he can enchant them with the idea of their learning, their virtue, their piety, and other natural graces, the more secure he will have them in his hold, the more contemptuous and proud will they be against all who preach the gospel in simplicity and truth. This is the infidel within the Church, the Pharisees and outward professors: the former was the infidel without the Church, the *savant*, and the *liberal*, and the Sadducee of every name.

But, still, these are not all that I included in this class. Beside the Pharisees and the Sadducees, there are two other classes —the schismatics and the heretics—who will not hear the word of God, or will not retain it: for Satan is not only prince of this world, and the proud angel of light, but he is also a divisive spirit, splitting the body of Christ asunder; and a liar, who continually inventeth falsehoods, and palmeth them upon the world for truths: whereupon they do at once reject the truth in the stead of which he hath substituted them. And this is the true distinction between the spirit of schism and the spirit of heresy,—that the former divides, narrows, and contracts the truth; the latter upholds as the true word of God that which is not so, but only the wisdom of man, or the invention of Satan.

I do distinctly bear in mind, therefore, that the doctrine of the kingdom of Christ, which I now speak of—namely, that God is in Him reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing unto men their trespasses; that if you believe in Him, ye shall be delivered from the curse of a broken law, from the power of sin, and the penalty of sin, from death and the grave; and if you believe not in Him, as the Son of God and the Redeemer of the world, ye shall

utterly perish, there being redemption in no other, and regeneration only in the Holy Ghost, bestowed in virtue of His death, and administered by His own most gracious ministry:—this gospel, which I preach unto you continually, I do preach in the full assurance, and I pray you to be likewise assured, that it will utterly fail of any fruit in all those whose heart and soul go out after the world; who love the world and the things of the world. I say not, who are professed infidels, though that makes things a deal worse; but I say worldlings; who love the world, and say, "When will the Sabbath be over, that I may buy and sell and get gain?" who follow greedily after the world's wealth, or power, or vain society, or empty distinctions. Such who hear me, had better not have heard me; for this word Satan will pluck away before to-morrow's dawn, and it will be only another witness against you. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." The word of Christ hath no fellowship with the word of Belial. The wisdom from above hath no kindred with the wisdom which is of the earth. Therefore think ye not to grasp both worlds at once; the one in the right hand, the other in the left. It cannot be. Ye must renounce your idolatries. The first commandment is, "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me." This is the threshold and porch of the spiritual temple of salvation. Ye must renounce the hidden works of darkness, and the unprofitable works of this world, which is to be destroyed with Satan its prince. Ye must "seek first the kingdom of heaven and its righteousness;" and be content with its reproach, as more worthy than the honours and treasures of Egypt. And if ye will not, then hear me declare unto you again, that this word availeth only to your greater condemnation: nor will it avail to anything better, until ye will for God sacrifice right eye and right hand, and whatsoever in you offendeth His holiness.

And this gospel of the kingdom I offer also in vain unto, and pronounce it to be a testimony of witness against, all those who are trusting for salvation in their own dead works and religious observances. I preach unto you Christ, the End of the Law for righteousness, and the Author of righteousness to all that believe. I preach unto you the Holy Ghost, the

Creator of a new heart and a righteous spirit; who will make you holy, and harmless, and separate from sinners. And if ye will not accept salvation by a crucified Saviour, then I preach unto you the Law as your death, and God "as your consuming fire." Ye will not have the Law from Zion in its mercy: then have it from Sinai in its fearful terrors; have it as your prison and scourge while you live, and when you die have it as your accuser and your sentence: "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them!" Ye hypocrites, which of the laws of God do you not violate in thought, word, and deed? What word passeth from you perfect? what act holy? And do you think Christ will save you in the manner you will, who will not be saved as He will? Ye shall utterly perish, every one who looketh to be saved by another righteousness than the righteousness of Christ imputed to faith for justification, and for sanctification wrought in you by the Holy Spirit. But it is not to argue nor to remonstrate with you that I now speak, but simply to declare, that while you are under that delusion of Satan this word will profit you nothing. Know it will not, believe it will not. I know and believe it will not, and regard it as an evidence which is written in heaven against you, and which there shall never be cancelled, though it may soon be forgotten elsewhere.

Furthermore, and finally upon this head. To all those who, following the bountiful affections, beautiful objects, and benevolent desires of human nature, will not acknowledge the Lord Jesus Christ as the Redeemer and the Saviour, the Prophet and Teacher, the Quickener and the Renewer of the natural man; but, rejecting the gospel and its peculiarities as old wives' fables and superstitious mysteries, will pursue their schemes of education, of charity, of society, of morality, of religion, wholly apart from and independent of His blessing;—to all such classes, who do abound without number amongst us, I know and feel assured that I preach the word of the doctrine of Christ in vain. Oh, how thou art entrenched, O Satan, how thou art entrenched in thy beautiful deceptions! Thou hast played thy part well in this last age. Thou art all but the Holy One, thou consummate deceiver!——I do take

God to witness that I have warned you every one, who go on heedless of the Redeemer and the Mediator, that you are under the delusion of Satan in the semblance of the angel of light. You cannot receive the word; you cannot hear it: he plucketh it away so soon as it is sown: it is as idle tales. But, O beloved brethren, it is not idle tales or cunningly devised fables: it is the truth of God in a mystery. In a mystery, I confess: not palpable to the natural man; yet to the honest and good man commending itself at first sight, and inviting his further research. Oh! answer me this one question; Why doth Satan put on these appearances so like unto Christ, if Christ, very Christ, be not most comely and beautiful? Why would he steal those forms of mercy, of charity, and of benevolence, yea, and of moral and religious truth, did he not know that they are dear and profitable unto the estate of man? But, ah! ye will not pass over Jordan unto the promised land: ye will not have faith in Christ, ye will not humble yourself unto the teaching of the Spirit. And Satan hath you, and hath you only the more securely by reason of his disguises. *He* loveth not those disguises. He hateth Christ, though he be fain to trick himself with His pretended glory. Murder is his dear act, and a direct falsehood is his word; but that he may deceive *you* also, and drive a richer and a better prey, he betaketh himself to this cozenage. And you are his stalking-horse, to approach and come over the fry, the numerous fry, who swim the common stream. Ah, Lord! how long! how long stay dost Thou make! When wilt Thou come to disenchant the world, and cast out that master of its enchantment?

Therefore, men and brethren, give heed, and take warning; and go not to say, "I will give ear to thee again some more convenient season: it is a small matter, I can take it up at any time: the word is still with me, and the word is omnipotent to save." What sayest thou? the word is omnipotent to save! Thou shouldst have said, To save or to destroy! But I tell thee it will not save thee against thy will; and that thou canst, as till now, contend with it and baffle it. Think not such unworthy thoughts, as that God will take thee by constraint, or overcome thee by force. It is upon thy will that He doth

operate by His word; and if thy will be to give thy heart unto thy farm or thy merchandise, it is token enough that His word will not quicken in thee. But if, with good and honest hearts, ye will receive these words which I now deliver to you, of salvation by the free grace of God in Christ Jesus, through the teaching and operation of the Holy Spirit, then it shall bring forth fruit unto the glory of God; and shall contend with evil in your hearts, and with doubt and disbelief and error, until at length you be brought into the clear and manifest conviction of your election of God in Christ Jesus, your union to Him in the covenant of redemption, your actual redemption from the power of original sin, and your regeneration in the midst of a sinful body and an evil world. Which steadfast and unremoved assurances of faith are not otherwise to be reached unto or attained but by the diligent hearing, marking, believing, and inwardly digesting of the truth preached unto you in the Holy Scriptures. To which perfect condition of the saints may the Lord bring you all in Christ Jesus, to the praise and glory of His great name!

And thus have I wrestled in this Lecture with the four most popular and common artifices of Satan, whereby in this great city he doth succeed in diverting men from the hearing of the word, or destroying the fruitfulness of the word in those who hear it. And though there be many who are not under the thorough and masterful influence of these his arts, yet there is no one born in this generation, and living in this place, who is not affected less or more by their evil influence, somewhat perverted in his spirit, and hindered of the full fruitfulness of the word of God. Wherefore I do entreat you all, as your only protection, to seek earnestly the blessing of the Holy Spirit upon the preaching of the word; and to regard it with much reverence, as Christ's ordinance for the salvation of souls—"by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." And let me entreat you to pray continually for the ministers of the word, who have in this city a terrible contest to wage against Satan's troops of materialists, formalists, sectarians, and heretics. And for me, brethren, pray continually, that my spirit may be delivered from those

very arts of Satan; and that I may be able, with truth and sincerity, and much earnestness, to declare the word of the gospel to all who are drawn hither; and that the word of God may prevail against the artifices of Satan, in every ingenious form which he may assume for men's deceiving and destruction. And may the Lord grant to every one of you increasing wisdom and knowledge in the word of God, and abundance of the fruits of the Spirit, to your establishment in all assurance and blessedness, through Jesus Christ! to whom, with the Father and blessed Spirit, be honour and glory for ever and ever.

LECTURE II.

THE SEED ON THE ROCK, WHICH WAS BURNT UP OF THE SUN.

THE first impediment to the fruitfulness of the word, concerning which we have discoursed at length, ariseth from Satan's artful malignity in plucking it away so soon as it is sown in the heart: but this against which we are now, by God's help, to warn you, ariseth from something in the hearer; likened in the parable to thinness of soil, and explained in the interpretation by his not having root in himself. Another characteristic of this class is given in their "hearing the word gladly:" which also has its correspondence in the emblem; for it is well known to the husbandman, that the seed which falls upon a sharp, thin soil, or upon a dry, rocky, and stony part of the field, is the soonest to spring up and ripen; but, being ripened, is good for little, either in respect to straw or seed. And, to destroy anything that might possibly come of it, the sun is represented as rising with a powerful heat and scorching it: which again hath its correspondency, thus given in the interpretation; "When tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended." Which very descriptive traits enable me to embody a very distinct idea in my own mind of this class of hearers, which I shall, by the blessing of God, endeavour first to make you comprehend.

They "have no root in themselves"—that is, nothing takes root in them, but everything springs up hastily and runs to seed. The impression you make upon them endureth "for a while," and only for a while; can stand no trial, and resist no temptation; but occupies the empty head and vacant heart, until another ask for admission, which it easily finds, and another and another, until vanity and voidness become the

very character of their life. Upon whom the seed of the word falling, may with gladness be accepted, and with promptness carry a certain head; but soon it droops and dies, and disappoints the husbandman. And what they bear is but the chaff, which every wind drives to and fro; or the refuse and hungry grain, which must be winnowed out from the rest before you lay it up in the garner.

I reckon, therefore, that this part of the parable instructeth you who hear, and us who teach, that there are in the constitution and discipline of the mind pre-requisites to the right entertainment and fructification of Divine truth, which are to be carefully taken into the account by parents and teachers, and all concerned in the education of youth: and which being carefully besought of God, and diligently craved, do give an easy inclination unto and ready reception of the word, and constitute the good soil of an honest heart: which being neglected, and the contrary allowed or encouraged, do cause a disinclination to, or ready rejection of, the word, and constitute the rocky, stony, or thin soil mentioned in this part of the parable. This doctrine doth establish an intimate connexion between all those natural causes which go to form natural character, and that divine word which alone can form spiritual character; and teaches us that everything in providence is connected with everything in grace, and that from our very childhood we are either preparing ourselves for the reception or the rejection of a preached gospel;—a doctrine little thought of in these times, when the all-in-all of the Divine work is placed in conversion, and the conversion is thought to be so much the better according to the unpropitiousness of the conditions. And certainly it is not my purpose to deny that the work of God is the more to be remarked in the extreme cases of conversion which He worketh, (though I reckon the appetite for such is but a bastard Popery;) nor is it my purpose to deny that there is no fructifying of the seed of the word but by the supernatural water of the Spirit; while, at the same time, I maintain, that our Lord instructs us, by two parts of this parable, that there are minds which, by nature and education, are disposed, and others which are by the same causes indisposed, to the receiving and retaining of

Divine truth. I am not stationed by the Church to accommodate my Lord's words to any system, either in my own mind or in yours, but to interpret them faithfully: and I perceive that either there is no meaning in this and the last parts of the parable, or that is the meaning which I have now given. And however much, at first sight, it may seem to war with the popular theology at present reputed evangelical, it will be found, upon examination, greatly to support the true orthodox doctrine of the Church; which, while it yields regeneration only to the supernatural work of the Holy Ghost, doth yet view everything which befalleth us, whether immediately from Providence, or mediately through the Church, to be a part of God's dealing and argument with us to the end of bringing us unto Christ. Whence the Church appointeth infant baptism, under proper sponsorship, in order to signify that every act done by another towards these little ones, should be done in the Spirit of Christ; while at the same time she teacheth, that all the acts of God's providence, towards those within the covenant, are acts as much under the dispensation of Christ as is the giving of His Spirit. But, in these times, when we have emptied the sacrament of baptism of all its holy burden, and constituted an ideal sacrament of conversion, it will be necessary to clear these things somewhat more distinctly.

The error and evil of making the saving fruits of the word to depend upon any predisposing causes in nature and education, or, to speak more correctly, in our creation and providence, consisteth in the views which the natural man hath of creation and providence, as dependent upon himself, and in some way or other caused and influenced by himself; so that divines fear lest, if they were to grant that grace is connected therewith in any way, the natural man should think that the kingdom of grace also is dependent upon himself, as being dependent upon the other two. And therefore, in order to prevent such a fatal occupation of the realms of grace by the powers of nature, the Divine breaks down the bridge, and totally debars all passage from the one to the other. In which behalf no one hath more diligently laboured than myself, when discoursing to you concerning the work of the Spirit.

And when you find men allured by the error, that in their own strength they can attain to any spiritual gift, you must deny it at once, and shew them that faith is the gift of God, and the new birth, which is consequent on faith, "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God;" and that the Spirit is under no law of causation, but as the wind which bloweth whither it listeth. This is the true method, I say, of dealing with such self-sufficient naturalists, or rational Christians, as they vainly call themselves; but if they will stand fast, and have patience to go into the matter profoundly, a better way is to go to work and shew them that they are fundamentally wrong with respect to their notions of creation and providence, which, we shewed in our Introductory Lecture, are as much taken under the care and control of the Mediator as is grace. For the Redeemer did not purchase power only over that part of men's lives which is posterior to the new birth of the Holy Ghost, but all power He purchased in heaven and in earth. And, as He said of His Father, so say I now of Him, that a sparrow falleth not to the ground without His permission, and that the very hairs of our head are numbered. And I make no doubt He is exercising the law of sovereign mercy and justice and goodness and love to those who know Him not, as well, though not in the same kind, as to those who know Him—to the nations in darkness, as to the nations in light—making all things to work together the glory of God, peace on earth, and good-will to men;—that He is preparing the soil of nations, and the minds of men, before He comes, making highways in the desert. For how otherwise could He be the judge of men and of nations, were He not extending over all one plummet of righteousness and plumb-line of mercy? It is for us to make leaps, and deviations, and backslidings in the execution of our purposes; but not for Him who is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. Wherefore I say unto every one here present, that there is the grace and mercy of a Divine purpose in his creation, and every gift of his creation; and in every event of his life hath there been a wise decree of providence, for which, for every one of which, he is answerable as a defaulter before God, if he have not discovered, and acknowledged, and profited by the grace which there certainly

was therein. And to signify this is one of the ends of the baptism of infants; which declareth that from the womb they are subjects of this Divine grace. The Trinity—that is, God, as revealed by Christ Jesus—doth claim the birth and life of the little one as their own, and do write him down in the sight of all as the offspring of their handiwork, the creature of their providence, and the object of their care. And this is not the less true of all, that it is only by sacrament declared in the Church upon her children, because the Church only is regarded by Christ as believing His declarations. But though only declared of the children of the Church, there can be no doubt it is true of all, and would be of all declared, if they would but confess a faith whereto the declaration might be made. For it is manifestly preposterous, and a profanation, to declare any of the fruits of Christ's redemption to those who believe not at all in Him.

Which things believing to be true, and holding, as I do, that the kingdom of creation and providence are as much redeemed by Christ, and entrusted to Him, as the kingdom of grace; and that these three together, not one of them, constitute the kingdom of the Holy Ghost; I have a clear and distinct understanding of what our Lord teacheth in the parable, and can unfold it not only with preservation of the indefeasible right in regeneration to the Holy Spirit, but adding thereto His indefeasible right in creation and providence. For surely it is in error and ignorance that we conceive any work in the universe to be wrought independent of the Holy Spirit, even as it is an error to think that there is any reason which is independent of Christ. And the error comes of the will, which hath been dislocated from the universal will of God, and hath carried from their centre all knowledge and all order. This being acknowledged, as all orthodox divines will readily acknowledge it, then say I with respect to the parable,—Behold this is what our Lord declareth, That the man who hath neglected to use his mind, as the gift of God, to its proper end of meditation of himself, and contemplation of outward things, and discovery of truth, and practice of righteousness, and other such worthy occupations, which have an inward subject, as well as an outward object, the man who hath not constrained

himself thus to sink into the depths of his own being, but allowed himself to be acted upon by outward things, and passively to receive their impressions, or occupied himself with the observation and arrangements of their variety, and loved men's discourse for its showiness and outward display, rather than the light which it cast inward into his own soul; who, in short, hath dislocated the outward providence from his own inward spirit, and his own inward spirit from the Father of spirits, by the habit of practically denying and disregarding these the ultimate spiritual ends of all appearances,—which is the true character of an outward vain man; that such a one may receive the word gladly at the first hearing, and keep hold of it for a while, like any other novelty, but that it will soon pass away before the first scorching sun of temptation and trial.

The question is, Whether men shall be indulged in their notion that the works of creation and providence are under nature and fortune; or be rebuked of their notion, and taught that they are under the spirit of grace, and that we are answerable for every dispensation thereof, as a dispensation of the Spirit, and will be held guilty for the rejection of the Holy Spirit, and condemned upon that account, if we be not brought thereby to a right sense of God's authority and goodness, and a ready hearing of the word of His gospel when it is preached unto them. Now, I am bold to assert that it is only half a gospel which doth not preach the redemption of creation and providence, as well as of the soul; and it is a robbery of Christ not to combine in Him the Creator, the Provider, and the Redeemer. Therefore, wherever this gospel of the kingdom is preached, it should be made known, that since the Fall every faculty of the mind and power of the body, every gift and endowment of natural life, and dispensation of Providence, prosperous or adverse, is a talent bequeathed to every one of us, according to the number of which will be our responsibility, and according to the improvement of which will be our reward. And it is a miserable conceit and most slender system of truth, to set forth all before conversion, as not in the account of grace, and even to give a reflected glory to their notion, according to the maxim, "The greater sinner, the greater

saint;" which is a strange jumble and confusion of the wicked slander upon the apostle's doctrine, that we should do evil that good may come. And it has the bad effect of contenting people in their sins, until some great event shall occur in the providence of God, sufficient to work the mighty work for which they are folding their hands in idle expectation. But I say unto you, No; not by any means to conceive so false an idea of the gospel of Christ, which hath made known to all men that the Lord is governing the world according to a gracious purpose of redeeming it, seeing it hath been purchased back from the curse by the death of Christ, who now in heaven is governing and over-ruling all things to the one end of destroying the works of the devil, of clean subverting them, and sweeping them away from the face of the earth. And that every man is to regard his lot as disposed and ordained upon this principle of grace, whereof, if he have been ignorant hitherto, he should be no longer kept in ignorance when the gospel beginneth to be preached unto him: for this is the end of preaching this gospel unto men. And even in preaching to the heathen I would quote Paul's discourse to the Athenians for my model of this, wherein he calleth them to repent of their wickedness, which they had done in the days of their darkness; not by the consideration that God had overlooked that part of their lives, but that He had winked at it, and now had sent His Son to awaken men to a sense of their atheistical lives, and of the judgment which was to come upon impenitent transgressors. And in the same spirit I would say unto every one of you, even if you were heathens, that you have accumulated sin upon your heads by every act of your previous life, and indisposed yourselves to the reception of Divine truth, by the soil of falsehood, which your much ploughing with wickedness hath created in you. But how much more, being Christians, baptized Christians, under the regiment of Christ, the mediatorial King of the world, and, in every office and occupation, deputies over a portion of His purchased world, do I say that you egregiously err against the truth, and offend against grace and mercy, in denying the same with your heart, which bestows itself upon the creatures; with your lips, which frame discourse of them

as if they were your own; with your life and conversation, wherein you walk as if you were under no authority of the Son of God, and generously entreated by no dispensations of His gracious providence.

If the Lord did not connect His dispensation of grace with His dispensations of creation and providence, there could be no meaning either in this part of the parable, which makes the miscarriage of the word to arise from the unsolid and unsettled character of the hearer; nor in the last part, which makes the fruitfulness of it to depend upon "the good soil of an honest heart," seeing these are conditions of the soil into which the seed is cast, and previous to any operations of the seed thereon. But more than this, the word itself would be without any wisdom of a divine device, or judgment of divine righteousness, were there not a certain condition of human nature to which it is adapted, and another condition to which it is not adapted. For wisdom consisteth in the adaptation of means to an end, and judgment in the various apportioning of good and ill, according to our deservings. And, as I believe that, of all means of grace, the word and the ministry of the word is the most effectual; as of all judgments it is the most certain, being always either the savour of life or of death, and never returning void of its purpose, good or evil, in order to accomplish the twofold purpose of God; it must have a fitness of accommodation to the human soul when found in certain conditions, and consequently an unfitness to the human soul in other conditions. And therefore the great problem in all Christian instruction and discipline, in all legislation and government, in all domestic and social economy, is to find out the means of cultivating those strains of character and feeling which are in best accordance with the word of God. Indeed, were there not relations of this sort established between the three kingdoms of creation and providence and grace, I cannot see what difference it would make, and what duty there could be in training children in this way or that way, in governing people in this way or that way; and instability were as good to be made the order of the day as security, pride as humility, sensuality as temperance, ignorance as knowledge, despotism as liberty, and anarchy as govern-

ment. But the contrary, which is known to every one, and practised by every good family and wise government, reveals it to be the constant conviction of men, that there is established in the counsels of God, an intimate connexion between the good and evil conditions of the natural man, and the progress of the gospel; and that there are soils on which it will flourish and bear fruit, and soils on which it will not flourish and bear fruit: into the particulars of which doctrine I am not to enter at present, being anxious only to establish the general principle for future application.

And be it further observed, that in very truth, when this subject is examined to the bottom, these moral virtues of honesty and sincerity and truth and temperance and justice and mercy and benevolence and grace, are, if I may so speak, nature's pleading in behalf of the gospel, and nature's testimony to the gospel, that it is of God. That the cardinal virtues of the philosophers and wise men in all ages, and the fundamental laws and bonds of all countries, are found to accord with the precepts of the gospel, is the best demonstration that the gospel is "peace on earth, and good-will to the children of men." And when your sceptics go about to shew this moral precept in Confucius, and that other in Socrates, and that other in the traditions of the Simian sage, and so forth, far from invalidating, they do only confirm, the gospel, by shewing that it contains in itself the elements of human reason, and is big with the blessed burden of the world's redemption. But they reason in their much ignorance, who think that this morality is the gospel. The redemption from sin, and the regeneration in holiness, is the gospel; the enabling of men to observe that high morality, and to pass far above and beyond it. To make those highest strains of the abstractest sage current with the tradesman and the peasant, yea, to advance the tradesman and peasant into the faculty of performing all, and more than all, that the sage hath conceived in the idea; this is the gospel. The gospel is power to do good, liberty to do good, joy to do good, in all its forms. It doth naturalise good, and make it common. It doth pitch aloft the base and foundation and framework of society, into a purer and more benign atmo-

sphere, where fruits of knowledge and charity and order and beauty do ripen, which sicken and die in the underground of nature, where the gospel is not. I may say, therefore, that the gospel makes a soil for itself, as do the plants of the earth, by their decay and growth again: so that it is a very unnatural and criminal thing, yea, and a very difficult thing, for a country to cast it utterly out; and when a country hath indeed cast it out, having once been firmly rooted there, it hath never come to pass that it hath rooted itself there again.

These are deep subjects, full of thought, and of the greatest practical importance; this man-tillage and soul-husbandry, in preparation for the word of the gospel, being in truth the great end and advantage of all civil institutions in the eye of God, for which He hath given them such a high warrant in His word, and obliged His people to observe a reverence of their authority even though exercised against their own lives. And those who will not give heed to these great and fundamental relations of things natural with things spiritual, but cut the fine and delicate thread with one sweep of infallible will and inevitable power, which they call conversion, do prepare all that follow them for despising government and ordinance of every kind, from the domestic to the national. And I make no doubt in my own mind that there is an intimate connexion at this day between the theology called Evangelical, in contradistinction to the orthodox theology of the Reformers, and which resteth all upon the act of conversion, and will not look a hair's-breadth in advance of it; and the politics called Liberal, in contradistinction with the religious politics of the Reformation, and which make all government to rest solely upon the principles of the common conveniency and common interest, and to be conducted only by rules of expediency bearing thereupon.

While I maintain this principle, therefore, of the inseparable unity of the three kingdoms of creation, providence, and grace, under one King, even Christ, to whom all power is given in heaven and earth, as a great principle in theology, in education, in national polity, and all the inferior economy of social life, I am, at the same time, aware of the danger to which the principle is continually liable, of being perverted to

signify and support the inference, that there is, therefore, a natural transition, without any supernatural agency from the two former kingdoms, of creation and providence, into the latter kingdom of grace, which is an inference of the most fatal tendency, completely subverting the Christian religion to its very basis, and substituting in its stead a system of rationalism or natural religion. But I would even grant the inference, and maintain it as the perfection of all Christian doctrine, if it were so that Christ were *naturally* recognised in the kingdoms of creation and providence, instead of nature being utterly blind thereto; so that it is as much the work of the Spirit to establish Christ therein as in that region of grace which is thought properly to pertain to Him. But in my view of it, the Spirit hath done little for us until He hath taught us to discern Christ ruling over all; yea, and shewn us that in the time of our darkness we were objects of His solicitude and grace and mercy, no less than in the days of our light. And therefore, so far from destroying or curtailing the domain of spiritual religion, this doctrine, being rightly apprehended, doth only extend it over all things. Again: if, as I believe is not unfrequently the case, the soul hath received the doctrine of Christ's government in providence and grace, and grown up from its baptism under the idea and belief that all is grace, and all equally grace, then I maintain, that this is the true growth of the Spirit which the Lord desireth, and that in such an one the word hath the fastest root and the best fruit: and that conversion in one who hath been introduced into the Church by baptism, however frequent, is not to be regarded as the thing which God intendeth or desireth, but the consequence of our prodigality in squandering away the knowledge, omitting the occasions, and neglecting the admonitions which we ought to have improved; or if not to be referred to any such marring of the sweet design on our part, then on the part of our parents or instructors, or of the Church of Christ in which we were reared; but, wherever the blame resteth, certainly it is to be reckoned a marring of the good purpose of God, which is, that every child of His, as he groweth in years should grow in wisdom and in favour with God and man.

This part of the parable doth not require me to enter further into so very difficult and deep a question as that of the soil which in the souls of men is prepared by a Christian education, Christian morals, Christian laws and government, and, in general, by whatever is comprehended under the providence of God, apart from His grace and Spirit, for the reception of the word when it shall please the Great Sower to plant it there by the Spirit, and for its nourishment, increase, and fruitfulness when it springeth up. The remainder of this most deep, yet most important and necessary subject, we shall take up when we come to the fourth part of the parable, whereof it forms the characteristic peculiarity, describing those in whom the seed bringeth forth, as being of the "good soil of an honest heart." Till which requesting you to consider in your own minds this subject of the secondary influences which prepared the way for the gospel in the souls of men, that you may be ripe for the examination of so deep and important a matter,—and conceiving that enough hath been said to justify the doctrine, that there is an aptness and inaptness in the soil, and to clear it from the Pelagian and Arminian abuses; we would now endeavour, in the strength of God, to shew out the evil of the thin soil as it existeth, and apply the subject to the various classes who are labouring under the evil, and thereafter point out the method of its cure.

II.—THE APPLICATION.

Which office rightly to discharge, it will be necessary that we examine this part of the parable a little more closely. It is in Matthew thus expressed: "He that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it: yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while; for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended." In Luke it is—"Those on the rock are they who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away." In Mark it is—"And these are they likewise, which are sown on stony ground; who when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness; and have no root in them-

selves, and so endure but for a time," (or more literally, "but are for a season:") "afterward when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended." There are in these words very sufficient materials for understanding and delineating the class of people referred to: out of which materials I select, as the distinguishing characteristics of the class, these two: first, "They have no root in themselves;" secondly, "They receive the word with joy."

First, "They have no root in themselves:" by which I understand they have no ground or soil for anything to take root in; or, as they say, men without solidity or stayedness, of a thin soil, superficial, having no depth of mind or strength of character. It is a distinct class or character of people, whom all of you must at once recognise in yourselves or some of your fellows or acquaintances; men of quick feelings, but not permanent; fond of novelty and change, caught with every hook in the stream, and carried about with every wind of doctrine; for ever learning and never coming to the knowledge of the truth. "Having no root in themselves;" that is, anchored and fixed upon no principles of faith, but tossed about like the waves of the sea, which cannot rest, or like the vessel without anchor and rudder, which the troubled waves carry about at their pleasure. These are men of words and of opinions; now with truth, and now without it; now for God, and now against Him, as they may happen to be impressed; for guidance from within themselves have they none. Not indeed the servants of Satan the proud adversary, who inherit the outfield of the hearers of the gospel; or rather, are not in the field, but upon the enemy's border, and only come over the line into our quarters to spy out and hear what is going on; but the servants of Belial, the spirit of vanity and ostentation, who love the showy and attractive forms of things, haunt assemblies, are seen on parades, speak to make an impression upon him whom they address, and listen in order to flatter and please and gain the good opinion of him who addresseth them: they are of a good, easy, and flexible nature; but, bending always, you have no purchase with them or over them, even when you have obtained a hold of them. It is a form of the spirit, not of the intellect; for you shall find it associated

with intellects of every degree, and with learning of every depth. Its inclination is to be shallow and specious; yet, for the sake of attracting more notice and celebrity, it will go great lengths, and often make great discoveries, insomuch that the rarest and most remarkable specimens of this type I have found amongst our most distinguished philosophers: and it hath been the ruling character of the French school for a century, and is so still. So that the matter lies deeper than the degree of knowledge or the strength of intellect: being in the spirit, which makes every thing veer round with it. Observe now how it is.

There are these three great idols to which men pay their homage; first, their own individual particularities,—that which is peculiar to one's self, and not another's; secondly, those things which they have in common with others, which others have an inheritance in, or, as it might be called, one's community; and, lastly, the outward world and its possessions. Now, according as the one or other of these idolatries prevails, a different character is engendered. If the spirit of personality or individuality be uppermost, it begets the proud man, in all his varieties of silent self-contemplation, stoical indifference to others, envy and malice towards those who disagree with him, moping melancholy, solitary musings, deep schemes, and strong purposes, daring resolutions, and violent actions, rebellion against God, against law, and against custom; of which class there are not many in these times, save some few in the lower ranks of the community. This is the form which Satan assumeth when Christ is in His strength. Of such stuff Satan makes men, to oppose apostles, and Puritans, and Covenanters, and accordingly they were frequent in those brighter and better ages of the Church. Or, when he has a scheme on foot, as he hath among certain of our common people, to subvert religion altogether, then he maketh use of such men; and therefore I said there be a few such among the lower orders, for their leaders mark themselves. Now the characteristic of such is the very opposite of that before us: they have too much root in themselves; they have all their root in self, and will not take root in Christ, who is the life, and the life-bearer, the great trunk of life, whereof we are but the

branches. Whereas those who have no root in themselves, are made from worshipping the common and not the peculiar qualities of our being, and are continually considering whether they have more or less of such a quality, talent, or endowment than another, and so conceiving vanity or envy. They must always have a theatre to expose their parts upon; some rout for which they may deck their beauty; some assembly for which they may adorn their person; some market in which they may set up their wares to sale, for the price of applause and distinction; some arena with spectators around, where they may contend with their rivals. This is the vice of society, which grows out of the demand for it; being rightly regulated, it is the delight and ornament of society; and in society you find its excess and extravagance. All who give way to fashion, as a ruling principle, are perfected in it: they have no root in themselves. All who give way to public opinion, as a ruling principle, are perfected in it: they also have no root in themselves. And all who love to display their qualities in the sight of a proper company, are also perfected in it: they have no root in themselves. Such people are very complaisant, because they live by approbation: they are very courtly, and give you ready ear; they readily acquiesce, and seem to rejoice in the things spoken unto them; but they are for a season, temporary and transient, during but a while. This is the spirit which produceth the second class in the parable. And now, before passing on, I will barely shew you the generation of the third, that you may have the whole matter in a hand's-breadth, and understand what the parable means;—which is this, that there be three classes of natural spirits, whereto, when men have given their homage, the gospel is to them a vain, idle, and fruitless word. The third, I said, ariseth from the worship of the worldly goods and possessions; not of personal power, like the first; not of outward distinction, like the second, but of brute and inanimate matter,—the wine, the corn, the oil, the table, the house, the lands,—these things, not for power or vanity's sake, but for the senses' sake, for the pleasure, and entertainment, and delight of the five senses of the body. To gratify which, there must be much labour, and to keep which there must be much care, and to enjoy or

possess which there must be much pleasure. So that among the cares, and riches, and pleasures of this life, the word is choked, and they bring no fruit to perfection. And so have ye the principle of the threefold division of fruitless hearers set forth to you, which, after all, comes exactly to what John saith in his first epistle, "the lust of the flesh; the lust of the eye," that is, vanity; and "the pride of life," that is, personal dignity.

From the first class of men, in whom the divinity of self hath obtained the lordship and mastery, Satan, by the birds of the air, those ravenous and soaring creatures, which are emblematical of the angels of rebel ambition and satanic majesty, doth pluck away the seed as soon as it is sown; or, in the spirit of pride and self-sufficiency, doth trample it under foot as a contemptible thing: whereupon such men, being bereaved of Christ's ministry of humiliation and love, of the Spirit's ministry of truth and consolation, do become at length proud as Lucifer, and murderous as Satan, are given up to believe the great lie that there is no personal God, and are left to mangle and torture themselves upon the thorny bed of their own doubt and disbelief, and pride, and cruelty. These are infidels, blasphemers towards God, scornful and contemptuous towards man, republicans that will bear no superior on earth, anarchists that will bear no rule of heaven above, without counsel, and without fear, and given up to all manner of desperation.

Not so the second class, who are not a concentrated point of terrible strength, but a wide-spread surface displayed to the eye and admiration of all, not like the electric spark of pure destructiveness, but like the moist atmosphere which will allow no concentration of electric force, but scatters and dissipates all things: taking freely, and freely communicating, they hear the word gladly; that is, if they give ear to it at all, and believe it at all, which the greater part of them, taken up with worldly occupations and gaudy shows, do but seldom or never. If it find an audience and an entrance, then it is not with a contest and a battle against the high places and strongholds of pride, as in the former, for there are no such resistances in these; but it is with joy and pleasure, as a fresh

novelty and new excitement. They talk of it, they bustle about it, and hasten to and fro: they catch with greedy ear, and with rapid tongue repeat the shibboleth and watchwords, and other notable things, which may make them notable in the mention of them. But the matter sinketh not deep; and why? because there is no depth of soil into which it might sink. It would indeed create a soil for itself in time, if they would hold it fast, and suffer it to reveal their thinness and leanness, to rebuke their vanity and ostentation, and to lead them into the depths of their own sinfulness, and into the corresponding depths of the Lord's mercy and love. Yea verily, the word of God will work out for itself a soil, as do the plants of the earth by their alternate growth and decay, and shedding of their leaves and fruits and other outward ornaments, so the word would cast off one and another of those vain and idle appearances which have scourged the natural soil of these vain and ostentatious people, and work in them by degrees,—after many fruitless abortions, would work in them a soil fit for bearing the fruits of the Spirit of righteousness. And so doubtless it doth with some few of those in whose shallowness it first striketh its root; for, brethren, the seed of the word of God is so vegetative, that it will strike root in the clefts of the rock, and in the very rock itself,—which was signified by the waters of refreshment, the nourishment of all life flowing out of the rock: but in the greater part of these passive and unprofitable creatures, who live in the sunbeam, and can bear no shades of repentance, godly sorrow, and humiliation, go through no valleys of the shadow of death, nor ever approach to the confines of the territory of despair, and know not the strait and narrow path, nor the losses and crosses which must be suffered for Christ, nor the abjuration of worldly friendships, nor the abolition of vain attachments, it cometh to pass, as is said in the parable, that, having no root in themselves, they are occasional, (for that is the true meaning of πρόσκαιροι, translated by us "during for a while,") and in time of temptation fall away.

Secondly, "They receive the word with joy." There is a joy attendant upon the knowledge of the gospel, the joy of being delivered from the wrath and curse of God, from the

power of sin, and the misery of the first and second death; wherefore the gospel was proclaimed, "Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and good will to the children of men; glad tidings of great joy; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of the people Israel." But this joy is reserved for those who feel the grievance of their natural estate: whereas, to those who enjoy the natural life, it must first bring grief, not joy; for it comes upon the natural life with an accusation and withering curse, which must cause that every one who loveth his life, and understandeth the gospel's enmity thereto, must be divided, and as it were cut in twain, and driven aback in all his gay and greedy voyage. Wherefore his beginning must be in sorrow and humiliation, from nature's throne and birthright, even as Christ's coming was in sorrow and humiliation from His birthright and throne; and as He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, we must all begin by being the same. Yet withal there is mingled with it a joy, which at first is a joy of hope and looking forward; but afterwards, as the mind is changed, it becomes at once both a present joy and the foretaste of a future; never complete in itself, but always waiting for a completion, and therefore till the very end mingled with a certain cloudiness, which often lowers, and overcasts, and all but overcomes the light. By sowing in tears, we reap in joy; and by foreseeing the joy, we are able to sow in tears. By fearing and trembling before the word, the word doth become a presence and a fruitfulness of God in our souls. By becoming men of sorrows, and acquainted with spiritual grief, the Lord sees of the travail of our soul and is satisfied. By suffering in the flesh, we cease from sin; by crucifying the old man, we attain to newness of life; by that burial unto sin, which is signified in the waters of baptism, we become the children of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost. And so the gospel plant takes root amidst the ruins of our former selves, in the rock of our former stony and hard heart, and by a continual rending, and destroying, and dissolution, it grows, transforming us into a new and glorious temple of the Holy Ghost,—a root of ages, which shall never be shaken or removed.

But nothing of this is felt by those gay and gaudy children

of the world, who come to our churches and hear the word with joy; that is, the joy of self-satisfaction, and of excitement; of being reputed saints, of being looked upon as pillars of the Church, the joy of self-importance and self-enjoyment in a thousand forms. For self hath his joys out of religion as well as out of the world: even Satan can use the word for his ends; and so can that child of Satan, self; but the child of God is love and communion. So long as the law is used for a mirror to reflect our own obedience and perfection, it doth aggrandise and deify self with all the dignity and glory of God's present favour and eternal reward; nor until the law is seen to be the mirror of our deformity, and heard as the sentence of spiritual death through all the chambers of conscience and over all its various life felt as the sword of the executioner and avenger, not till then is self dejected or dismantled of her vainglory. And this counterfeit of true faith will only produce an outward obedience and conformity, so far as self will go in making sacrifices for self. For, the idol is still the same, though he may be served in a higher room, and with a less gross and vulgar offering.

And this, I may observe in passing, is the great fruit of the gospel when received by the world, as the world can receive it, not to destroy its enmity, not to allay its opposition to God, so that it should be less His enemy than before, but to purify the nature of its service of Satan, and change the weapons of its hostility to God. Satan preferreth the coarser offering of blood, cannibalism and savage warfare, the sacrifices of human victims, the slavery of men, the immolation of widows and children, and the kindred acts of barbarity, which the world, enlightened by the gospel, changeth into the war of words and contention of law, the cannibalism of envy and malice, and the deceptions of politeness, the covenant-breakings of fashionable marriages and divided households, with all other the kindred arts of civilisation and refinement.

The idol is the same while self stands, and until self lieth prostrate under the feet of Him who is love, it must ever come to pass that this pleasant and joyful religion, which easily accommodateth itself to circumstances, and feels not the adverse stream of the world, nor the enmity of nature, will

yield and give way when temptation cometh. That cost they had not counted: evil report was what they had not dreamed of. They stept out of the good report of the irreligious world at once into the good report of the religious world: they were shouldered by the religious mob, and their path strewed with palm boughs, as if they had already fought the fight and come to the triumph. The sandy foundation endureth the short calm of approbation and admiration; but when the wind blows, and the rain descendeth, and the streams flow, and beat upon the house, the house falls, being founded upon the sand. When self begins to be truly a loser in that quarter which they love, when persecutions begin to arise for the word, and the things seen begin to disappear, and nothing but faith remaineth, and the invisible things of faith, then these fall away; their season is past; they live in the sunbeam, and cannot endure the dark and troubled conditions of the soul; they are gone, they are not found. But when the sunbeam shall break forth again, and the heat of the sunshine breed the gay and beautiful creatures, they will ascend upon the wing again, and play their merry dance and mimicry of action, shewing also their little points of variegated light, and after a season they will pass again, and be no more seen nor heard. And thus it is that persecution is the purifying and building up of the body of Christ, and martyrdom is its crowning. Then it is you can discern the election from the world, the true veteran soldiers and hardy fighting men from the general cavalcade and universal muster which in time of peace come forth, at the call of shallow enthusiasm, and through the epidemic influence of a popular cause.

These two features of this class of hearers of the word enable me to identify certain quarters in the visible Church, where Satan hath succeeded in perverting souls by this form of his mystery of iniquity; which I now proceed to do in the spirit of love to all the true members of Christ. As hath been said, the converts of this infirm character generally come out of a worldly and gay class of men, who, by some powerful statement of the truth, come to be impressed: and as like generally produceth like, the impression is most commonly made by appeals to their fears or to their affections, or what

is commonly in these times called preaching to the heart,—simple preaching, and affectionate preaching, wherein there is no bone of doctrine, no strong sinew of duty, but an outward alabaster-form of skin and flesh; some water-colour gaudy sketch of the person of Christ; some flattering encomium of the beauty of religion; some poetical representation of the pleasures of godliness; perhaps some rhapsody of the joys of heaven, or savage scheme of the horrors of hell; some form of that preaching which now is popular throughout the churches, catches the ear of certain novices, and a little moves the surface waters of their spirit. They are said to be impressed, and are upon the instant hailed as brethren. They are taken under the wing of some society; they are advanced to be collectors of money for it; they receive the entree, and are introduced at certain religious parties, and are said to be doing well, in a most hopeful way; and they hear incessantly of the pleasures of religion, and of the great doings of the religious world. And what comes of it in the end? They rejoice, and much rejoice, but suffer nothing: they seem to think that Christ hath suffered the whole, and that they have nothing to do but to enjoy. Oh, I blush and am ashamed for the flimsy character of our religious novices. The noviciate in the most humane and easy of the Papal brotherhoods is hard and painful when compared with this. What know they? The names of the most popular preachers. What read they? The periodical religious publications. And what do they meditate in private? Some collection of texts for every day in the year, with perhaps the addition of a few lines of comment: but root in themselves they have none. To originate a meditation, to judge a doctrine, to taste a passage of Scripture without an exposition, to examine and try their own spirits, they skill not, and never attempt; and if any man would lead them into deep waters, or open to them any of the mysteries of godliness, they speak evil of him as one that is to be avoided: for they are exceedingly ignorant, and delight in nothing so much as the blind guidance of the blind. They spread out a certain show of fruit-bearing, but they take no root downwards: they spring up rapidly and run to seed, but the seed is chaff; and when the threshing-floor is winnowed, it

is carried away with the wind. If I mistake not, this is the description of a very numerous class of what are called evangelical people. Indeed I have no doubt of it, and do most devoutly lament it, and pray continually for its cure; which will not proceed until the deep things of the truth which are embodied in the standards of the churches become once more the substance of the minister's preaching, and of the people's believing; until the discipline of the churches be restored to the Reformation exactness, and the holy sacraments and ordinances become once more the definition of the Church, and its distinction from the world. But while so much of the spirit of society is engrafted into the Church, and the Church itself so defrauded of her doctrines—I mean, such doctrines as election of grace, union with Christ, the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, and the perseverance of the saints; and while her sacraments are prostituted as they are upon the swine which wallow in the beastly sty of this world, we shall continue to have such a ministry and such a community as the second part of the parable describeth. Converts such as they are numerous enough, while strong men are utterly failing from the midst of us: and no standard-bearers, no men of the spirit of Caleb and Joshua, are found to spy out the land of the enemy, and report it practicable for the Lord's host to go in and possess it. Like the men of Benjamin, they will turn their backs in the day of battle: or, to prognosticate more truly, they will never see any need for battle, because they believe that the enemy may be overcome by treaty; that he is capable of being satisfied in his demands, of being soothed with sweet words, and cajoled with fair promises, and won over by skilful arts to the friendship and the service of Christ: which is exactly at this day the popular notion amongst us, that there is not to be war for ever between Israel and Amalek, but that now the time is come for circumcising Amalek, and taking him into the bosom of the covenant. Such is the notion of the world which at this day existeth in the Church, that if you could but hire enow of missionaries, and scatter abroad the leaves of enow of Bibles, no matter how adulterated, the naughty and bitter waters of nature would be healed. Such Christians, such theologians, I am ashamed of: you certainly

are not of the seed of your fathers: and let your mothers, the Church of Scotland and the Church of England, blush for you, because you are bastard children. And they call it a revival: it is such a revival, such a transient gleam and momentary brightening up as the dying man hath immediately before the last struggle with death;—so near to death do I believe the Gentile Church to be arrived; and this I judge from the character of the revival. For while I saw the thews, and sinews, and mighty bones of the sleeping Protestant Church, I looked on amazed at his giant frame, and imagined that he might have piled Ossa on Pylion, and made war with the principalities of wickedness in heavenly places; but he awaketh, he reviveth from his sleep, and all my hopes evanish. His limbs he cannot erect, or even move, and hardly turn upon the bed: his voice is returned to childish infancy, and his feeble arm trembleth with age; rheum infest him everywhere, and the breath of life faileth, and his mighty proportions of body are his oppressions; and I know that he will never stand to war again, or do exploits of battle. The revival of the Gentile Church is such a demonstration to me of her close approaching end. The soil is thin, the seed can do no more than give this hasty show of vegetation: the waters of the Spirit cannot help the growth, but do only bring it more speedily to its premature bearing of empty husks; and all because it hath no depth of soil. The sun will arise, a day of temptation will spring up, and they will wither down, and become meet companions for the tares, to be eaten and to be trodden under foot by the cattle of the field.

To give stability unto such would require both the nutrition of Christian doctrine, and the training of Christian discipline. The Church might feed such babes unto the stature of strong men, by ministering the strong food which is proper to men of full grown age, whose senses are exercised to discern both good and evil. But this food they have reprobated with the odious name of Calvinism; although I take God to witness it is the doctrine of our standards, and that every one who speaketh evil of it, or lightly esteemeth it, doth speak evil of the understanding, and lightly esteem the character, of his mother. And while they will not arise into this region of

faith, they shall never acquire root and fixedness, but be driven about by the breath of every novelty, and readily perish, when the storm and whirlwind of temptation shall arise. Even now, being conscious of the infirmity that is in them, they give no battle, and shew no front to the enemy, but, by soft compliances and well-timed expedients, divert the storms of opposition in every quarter: which opposition it was our Lord's command that we should meet like good soldiers, and overcome in the strength of the victory which He hath won.

To give confirmation to such feeble and ill-grounded disciples, artificial expedients, such as they apply among the Methodists, are of no avail. It is not in the class-meeting, it is not in the church-meeting, nor in the confessional, that the steadfastness of a Christian character is to be attained. It is in the daily offices and transactions of life, in the fulfilment of all the duties which we owe to God and to one another;—which being unredeemed to God, and lying at the mercy of custom and nature, I will be bold to affirm, that all co-fraternisation within the conventicle, or in the religious drawing-room, or in the committee-room, will produce the evil effect of engendering sectarianism, schism, self-righteousness, and hypocrisy. Those meetings together of the people which fear the Lord, and think upon His name, should be as a breathing-time in our conflicts with the world; a council, held on the field of battle, concerning what is next to be done for the cause of God's glory, in the defeat of the world, the devil, and the flesh: and being used for such ends, they are most profitable, yea and necessary. But, being used for no such ends, but being ends unto themselves—that is, being taken as the proof of our Christian zeal, and the measure of our Christian activity, and the test of our soldiership—they do turn aside the understandings, and beguile the hearts of the people from the great ends of their calling and election, and leave the whole discipline of human life and business of the world without a rule and guide: and the result is, that the right hand is always fighting against the left, and no work is done for Christ. But, contrariwise, hypocrisy is engendered; and religion is measured by striking a balance between the services

in the church, or conventicle, or religious workshop of whatever name, and the customs of the world, or inclinations of our own nature, which we give way to in all other places. Which system of accommodation the Papists have so perfected, in their various religious orders, that it is too late in the day for us Protestants to think to surpass them, although this kind to which I now refer are fast following in their footsteps. Wherefore I pray them to give heed to counsel before it is too late to return. While such a discipline exists of open confession and religious registry, of prohibited books, and, above all, of prohibited doctrines, and these too the very marrow of divinity, there never will be a deep soil to produce abundant and well-ripened fruit, which, as we shall shew hereafter, is by nothing to be produced save the patient continuing in well-doing, and the constant endeavour to glorify God in all the places, and in all the occupations, and in all the occurrences of life.

Besides these forms, which the revival of the last fifty years has assumed, there is another at present engendering by the subtlety of Satan, which to delineate and expose aright, may be of great profit to the Christian Church: for it hath not yet settled into the chronical state of a sect and party. The Arminian spirit of preaching experience, and registering experience, which is nothing different from the confessions and good works of the Papists, hath at length begun to alarm many with apprehensions for the honour of Christ; who, not comprehending the proper position from which to contend, through their ignorance of the true visible Church, which they see only in our Arminian and Pelagian formalists, who call themselves Churchmen, but are of the synagogue of Satan, do come forth in their own single strength, and preach the assurance of faith, the immediate and instant assurance of our salvation through Christ Jesus. They preach Christ, as they term it; that is, the liberty of salvation through His merits; and they say, Do you believe that you are saved? And if you say, "Yes," they call upon you to rejoice, to go on and prosper. And on they go at full gallop, rushing against every sober-minded Christian and upbraiding him as they pass. Our good old distinctions between justification by faith in the

imputed righteousness of Christ, the assurance of which, we also allow, must commence the Christian's work, and sanctification through faith in the Holy Spirit—the former an act, the latter a work—they give little or no heed to whatever: although I believe this distinction to be at the foundation of all sound doctrine, and not, without the loss of both truths, to be confounded. And the prerogative of the Father to implant faith, which may lead us unto Christ, they make little discourse of, not knowing how to preach at liberty, with that rock always a-head of them; and never witting that this very rock is the stumblingblock at which the wicked are appointed to stumble. They preach as if their preaching could make Christ gainly and attractive to the natural man, which Christ himself never dreamed that His own all-accomplished preaching and fulness of the Godhead could do. And the consequence is, that these believers, instead of looking to the Father, and acknowledging Him as the Almighty power which overpowered their reluctancy, and empowered their powerlessness, to come to Christ, refer back unto their preacher, and call themselves by his name, saying, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas. This infection runs like wildfire. This seed springs up like Jonah's gourd; and like Jonah's gourd it will perish, affording no shelter to a man's soul in the strong heat of the sun. One cannot but love their zeal, and admire the ringlets of their childish beauty, and the freshness of their downy cheek; but, ah! what shall these avail in the day of fierce and fiery controversy, when man must brave the battle's edge, and snatch the martyr's crown from the midst of the fire? I also love them as I do my sweet children, and delight myself with their soft and yielding spirits: but when I speak to them as men, straightway they are offended. God knows how I suffer daily in my heart, when I behold these, and many other exemplifications around me, of this thinness of soil, perceiving how we shall be broken upon the first onset of the enemy, which the Lord for the present restraineth, and which may He long restrain! for who could look upon the tents of Israel scattered, and the children of the living God discomfited?

It is in my free office of an interpreter of Christ's word, and

upon my responsibility as a steward of his mysteries, that I am forced to make these painful disclosures of our present weakness to all whom it may concern. And now before advancing further in my subject, I would put to you a few searching questions, by which you may prove, whether you be of any of these classes of ill-grounded and joyful Christians which we are now discoursing of. Come, then, give heed, and answer me as a minister of God, intrusted to keep the door of His Church: Dost thou remember any scene of sadness when thou lookedst back to Sodom, whence thou hadst just been rescued; or lusted for Egypt's sensualities, to which thou wast in bondage? Dost thou remember the pangs of the birth of the new man in the stable of thy unclean heart; with songs and salutations from above, but with wretchedness and misery and denial of favour and entertainment on the earth? Hast thou had inward trials of Satan, fear of the world, scornings and scoffings of thy pride, rebellions of thy affections, perverseness of thy will? Hath the word taken root deep, deep, into thy immortal being? Hast thou heard it, and trembled on its hearing, and obeyed with fear and trembling? Tell me, whether through such clouds of the morning, the light of the morning did break in upon thy soul? Hadst thou, in such horrors of thick darkness, the view of that "burning lamp, and smoking furnace;" the one to enlighten thy darkness, the other to consume thy dross? Through such inward strugglings and strivings I ask thee if the word came to thee, and thy change of mind made way? For if not, thou art surely a hanger-on, and not a tried friend of the cause; a bravo, not a soldier; and I warn thee that thou wilt in time of persecution fall away. Persecution were the best thing that could befall thee; for thereby thou wouldst discover thy self-deception: but as that proof is uncertain, I pray thee to try thyself by undergoing the inward trial, and submitting thyself to the spiritual crucifixion of faith and holiness; otherwise thou need not expect to be a partaker of Christ's glory, never having partaken of his humility. Thou wilt deny Him, and yet though thou have thrice denied Him, He will thrice forgive thee, if indeed thou wilt submit thyself to feed His sheep, and take care of His lambs—that is, for the sake of His kingdom

and the children thereof, do offices of love, and humble services, in the spirit of love to Him who is their King. For as He said unto Mary, "Tell the disciples, and *Peter;*", not excluding, but specially including Peter, so saith He unto thee; and as He saved Saul the persecutor, so if thou wilt hear the word of the Ananias that may be sent unto thee, though now blind, thou wilt receive thy sight, and be a vessel chosen of Him to bear the fragrance of His name. And though thou not only art in a mood to deny Him in the event of persecution, but actually had denied Him, and that thrice in one night, thou shalt be received as Peter, interceded for as Peter was by the Lord himself, and made a strengthener of the brethren.

But this will not come to pass unless you give heed to those deep and solemn views of the Divine government which we set forth as the doctrine of this discourse; namely, that not only shall every action of a man's life be called into account by the Judge at the last day, but hath an immediate effect in somewhat hindering or somewhat furthering the hope of his spiritual calling by the everlasting word; every vain, every false, every hypocritical, every dishonest act, goes to a present account as well as to a future one, and somewhat disqualifies you for receiving the engrafted word, which alone is able to save your soul. Therefore, stand still and consider. There are few, if any, who have not a hope of being yet called and converted by the grace of God; for which end ye have come hither this night to hear the ministry of the word. Now I say, upon our Lord's authority, that the Word, however sweet unto your ears, and even joyful to your heart, cannot take root, where levity and laughter and gaiety and jollity hold the ascendant. It cannot bear fruit: and Christ, whose is the fructifying Spirit, hath declared it will not bear fruit. You might as well expect the slender tendrils of the root of corn to pierce the rock and gather nourishment from the flint, as that the word of God will take root in you: you might as well expect the shallow and untenacious stony soil, which hardly covers the seed, to shelter the exposed root from the scorching summer's heat, as that a heart fond of outward shows and appearances should imbed the seed of the word and afford it root sufficient to resist the temptations of

this world. Such inconsistencies will not come together in the economy of Divine grace. The Holy Spirit is not given in order to make sin and holiness meet together, but to expel sin and instate holiness. Ye must either serve Christ or Belial: ye cannot serve them both. And the first office of the Holy Spirit unto your souls must be to restrain these follies, and repress these levities, and overshadow these gaudy shows, and disgust you with their idle ostentations, and to kill within you the taste and love of these things, and beget the taste and love of things pure and honest and lovely and of good report, in order to prepare a soil in which the seed of the word may take deep root, and resist all the offences and attacks of Satan's power. Therefore give heed, and expect the Spirit to mortify these evil parts of your nature. Go not to indulge these, and think conversion will come notwithstanding: go not to run riot in these, and think the change will be the more remarkable. I do fear much that this appetite for extraordinary conversions worketh with fatal effect upon the unconverted, leading them to expect some such wonderful interference for their sake, as they read of in the magazine reports. But the common way of God's dealing with men, is to check them in their sins, and to move them with inward purposes of amendment, to bring His word home to their conscience, and expect them to give it faith and love and obedience in the Spirit, and so to prune their wickedness away by His word, as that they shall bear much fruit and become His disciples. But if you carry on in your old ways and indulge your former delights, and bring the same volatile and excitable character into spiritual things, then you shall never make progress to the saving of your soul, or the glory of Christ, or the good of the Church.

And let me speak boldly the truth, and faithfully tell you, that there is too much latitude allowed to this flighty fluctuating disposition, in what they call the religious world. For my part, I know and will acknowledge no religious world. I know only the Church and the world: but I know no religious world. You might as well speak of a bright darkness, or a bitter sweetness, or a righteous wickedness, as speak of a religious world. Yet so it is, we have such a name; ay, and

we have such a thing; where, with devotedness to God's glory and the Church's good, and a great mixture of excellent intentions of soul, there are present, at the same time, the love of show, the desire of popular applause, the love of large assemblies, hunger and thirst for excitement, idle and flourishing talk, vapouring and vaunting speeches, idolatry of one another, self-complacency, with much more which belongeth not to the Church of Christ, but is the staple commodity of the world. From which intermixture I augur no good.

It is my office to warn you against all love of spectacle and from all hasting after novelties; and to press upon you a grave sedate spirit, which loves communion with truth, seeks instruction and edification in righteousness, not pleasure and entertainment, and rejoices in simplicity and sincerity and truth: because in such a spirit only will the word of God take deep root, and bring forth much fruit to the praise and glory of God. Therefore, I warn you, and diligently admonish you, in hearing the word from my lips, or the lips of other ministers, to weigh the matter, and apply the matter, and bring it home to your conscience, and during the week to prepare your souls for it, by a most conscientious and honest discharge of every office, and utterance of every thought; to hate the very appearance of falsehood, and on no account of jest, or courtesy, or compliment, or apology, to utter a lie: also to look into the spiritual properties of all things, their relation to God and the immortal soul; not to gaze upon the changing forms and convenient uses which they have. For men's minds in this day, by idleness and vanity, and the exaggeration of appearances, and neglect of realities, have grown into a volatile, versatile character, which cannot bear the spiritual matters and unchanging realities of the gospel, but would have it also translated into the conditions of space and time, made meet for the present passing life, and accommodated to the conveniences of the place in which we have our abode. Therefore I do require it of you, to be grave and sincere in all your discourses and dealings with one another, to be moved by spiritual considerations, and for spiritual ends? and to measure the value of things by their godly uses; and it shall come to pass that the doctrines of the word will take a deep root in

your souls, and be of a continual service in your lives, and be desired as meat and drink, and be needful as the light unto your eyes, and the lamp unto your path, a guide to your understanding, and a consolation to your heart; your wisdom, your righteousness, your glory and salvation. But this brings us to speak at length upon the third thing proposed, which is the remedy of this evil.

III.—THE REMEDY.

Having thus shewn, according to my best ability, that this thinness of soil which retaineth not enough of moisture for the heavenly seed, ariseth from the vanities of life, and the falsehoods of worldly intercourse, with all other dishonesties and deceptions, which, though unseen and unblamed, are the true ingredients of worldly life, and which do so weaken the conscience and love of truth, and familiarise the soul to depart from uprightness for present pleasure and profit, that the unction of the Holy One which is truth and no lie, cannot abide in them, or the fruits of His Spirit be produced of them;—having also shewn that their having no root in themselves cometh necessarily from their being outwardly directed in their thoughts and purposes, and looking to the appearance of things in the eye of others, and consulting for its present expediency to the wellbeing of themselves, from making the children of Satan judges over them, and some forms of the visible kingdom the ultimate end of their life; instead of searching inward for the gift of faith, walking by its guidance, and coveting the best gifts of the Spirit, and the approbation of their own conscience and the word of God, and consulting for their comeliness and gracefulness in His eye-sight;—having also explained how, in consequence of this scattered and dissolute character, they are not capable of the warfare and inward contention with which the word maketh its way, and worketh its victory in the soul; but do receive it with a vain and unfounded joy, making it into a pleasant balsam, where it should be a corrosive caustic—a flattering unction of peace, where it should be a sharp knife to pierce through the joints and marrow—and a minister of

present satisfaction and future blessedness, when it should be a minister of present death, and thereafter of future blessedness;—and, finally, having shewn that these joyful hearers, who have no root in themselves, but merely catch the infection of hearing, and of believing, and of rejoicing, can only last while their faith harmoniseth with the worldly fellowship and good-natured enjoyment out of which it sprung, and cannot endure the ruffling of the gay element and palmy scene in which they have resolved to sojourn, but must, on the eve of persecution, give in, become treacherous, and wholly fall away;—we do now proceed, in dependence upon the Divine blessing, to shew you what remedy there is for persons of such a light character and slight faith: how, if they resist not the Holy Spirit, they may come to be of "an honest heart," to have root in themselves, and attain unto a depth of soil sufficient to preserve the Divine seed of the word, and bring it unto fruitfulness. For I am convinced, from my own personal knowledge of Christian believers in general, and of my own flock in particular, and from the temptations which beset a great, wealthy, and prosperous city at all times, and especially in these times of vanity and ostentation, and, above all, from the suffering and loss of my own soul, that this form of character concerning which I now treat is very frequent in the Church, that many are deceived by it, and that still more are kept in a low and fruitless condition; hearing much, and rejoicing in what they hear, yet unprofited in the hearing, because they hear not with faith; and unblessed with that joy, with which the world intermeddleth not, because it is the joy of the Holy Ghost, which the world cannot give, and which it cannot take away.

Now, the beginning of every remedy is to know and feel assured of the dangerous condition into which the disease hath brought us; for while the patient conceiveth it is but a slight ailment, and such as may well enough consist with the enjoyment and business of life, he heedeth it but little; but when he knoweth that it is a question of life and death, he sendeth for the physician, layeth himself up in the sick-room, and giveth heed to the prescriptions which are made for his dangerous case. Know ye, therefore, whosoever are of this

superficial character, giving heed to the opinion of others, steering by every wind as it happeneth to blow, instead of bearing onward in the constant course of holiness and truth and honesty, that there is no remedy for you, and that the word will not root in you; sow it who will, and water it who will, it will not come to any fruitfulness: and because ye bear not fruit, ye shall be cast out and trodden under foot of men; gathered as fuel, and cast into the fire to be burned. Take observation, I pray you, of the parable, and see if, in the three classes,—of self-worshippers, who are all root in themselves; of world-worshippers, who have no root in themselves; and of the worshippers of the things of the world, who are surfeited, sunk, and drowned in cares and pleasures,—you can find the solitary exception of one in whom the word beareth fruit. Is there a single seed which the fowls of heaven, Satan's proud and soaring messengers, which the hot and scorching sun of the baneful world, or the weeds of visible things, do not succeed in making fruitless? It maketh me tremble when I read the sayings of our Lord, so clear, so naked, so unaccommodating! clear as righteousness, naked as truth, and unaccommodating as the eternal judgment; —by whom the world of living men are divided into four classes: the inwardly self-sufficient; the outwardly self-sufficient; the worldlings; and the honest conscience-observer; and it is given as an inevitable law of the kingdom of grace, that the word of God cannot profit the three former classes; that the word of life cannot save them, and that they must inevitably die. Our Lord doth not soften the sentence with any qualifications: there is not even a word concerning the reformation, much less is there a word concerning the ceasing, of any or all of these three classes. Wherever this gospel was to be preached, it was to be preached, as the first great lesson of it, that there were three out of four classes in the world to whom it would be preached in vain; of whom one would spurn it hastily, another receive it superficially, a third receive it into the midst of worldly rubbish, but not one of them profit by it to the salvation of their souls. And mark ye, that this is the first lesson of the gospel which was embodied in a parable; and, moreover, that parable constructed on very purpose to

represent to the meanest capacity that there were three out of the four quarters of the spiritual compass, in which lay nothing but spiritual desolation; from which blew no genial breeze; from which came no sweet influences of spring, or summer, or autumn,—no messengers of good, nor cargoes of spiritual treasures, nor haply at a time ever drifted any utensil or token of blessed life;—but bleak winds of the frozen north, mountains and plains of ice, wrecks of miserable voyagers, the howlings of dreadful creatures, and everything which causeth or betokeneth spiritual death and desolation.

This irretrievable destruction of the three most numerous classes of the sons of men, which the parable teacheth, is a constant doctrine of the blessed and merciful Jesus, and of His holy apostles. In the Sermon on the Mount, it is again and again referred to; first, in the beatitudes or blessings, which are directed to none but the pure in heart, the poor in spirit, the meek, the merciful, the peacemaker, the mourner, the hungry and thirsty after righteousness, and the persecuted for righteousness' sake; and which are intended against the proud and high spirited, the men-pleasers, the hungry and thirsty after gain and pleasure, and the much-approved, much-applauded children of this present generation. The doctrine comes in a second time, where it is said, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon," or any two masters whatever; have a treasure on earth and in heaven too, gaining, as it were, both worlds; or trust in providence, and at the same time be full of cares; or have a double eye, and at the same time be full of light;—which are all laid down as the great impossibilities, the broad contradictions, the direct contraries of the spiritual world, like being and not being at the same time. The doctrine comes in the third time, where it is said, that "strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it; whereas the gate is wide, the way is broad, which leadeth to destruction, and many there be who go in thereat." To which it is added, that even the prophets or preachers of the word would themselves be led astray, and lead astray the flock of Christ, and should be attested to be true messengers of God only by their fruit; that is, by bringing to perfection the seed of the word. And, further, of the

multitudes which should profess His faith, none but those who did the will of His Father would enter into His kingdom. And the whole Sermon on the Mount concludes a strain most fit to be the improvement or practical application of the doctrine contained in this parable, "Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it," (Matt. vii. 24-27.)

Now, dearly beloved, have ye considered this, which is the true gist of the parable, that those three classes who have devoted themselves to self-sufficiency, outward reputation, and worldly gain, cannot profit from preaching, cannot enter into the kingdom of Christ, cannot be saved, but, without one solitary exception, must utterly perish. And in particular, at this time, do you observe, and take it to heart, that every man is dead, without remedy or help even of Christ, who hath the opinion of others and the custom of the world before his eyes as a rule to walk by. Those who give in to the mastery of fashion, and allow it to be a sufficient reason in any matter; —in the style of our house-keeping, which should be ruled by honesty; in the style of our person, which should be ruled by modest appearance and comely plainness; in the treatment of our servants, which should be ruled by duty; in the manner of our speech, which should be ruled by truth; in the manner of our feeling, which should be ruled by charity;—I say that whoever giveth himself up to fashion, as a rule of life,—and multitudes know no other, though they profess to know Christ, and attend upon his ordinances,—is dead while he liveth, and the word of God is cast away upon him, and crieth to God as a witness against him. You who are whirling in this gulf of active life know that all who are there perish.

And, though for distinction's sake, fashion be in an especial manner applied to a certain rank of life, and have a certain

locality given to it, where it is most active in its energy, and most foolish in its visible operation, turning night into day, and day into night, the retirement of home into the bustle of a multitude, and domestic society into a mob; and valuing, according to their notoriety and publicity, those sweets of social intercourse which heretofore were valued by their quietness and confidence; though this be the high service and unmasked wickedness of fashion, yet be it known unto you, that this influence of the opinion of the world is everywhere operative, and, wherever it operates, produceth spiritual death; mark the word, wherever it operates, produces spiritual death, and there cannot be spiritual life but by the death of this deadly influence. And why? Because the friendship of the world is enmity with God, because the world cannot, will not consent to the word of God: it knoweth not to yield, but to die; for Satan is the prince of it.

And this their vaunted public opinion is no better than Satan's voice disguised according to what the times will bear; from which disguise he would fain persuade you that it is the voice of God: but I tell you it is the voice of Satan; and whosoever is a spiritual man knoweth that it is so. What, you say to me, do you call that the voice of Satan which forbids us to drink, and swear, and commit adultery; which cuts off any one who transgresseth the orderly customs of the world? Thou silly child, dost thou think that Satan is only a sensualist? Dost thou not know that he is also a prince of light, yea an angel of light when it suits him? He will please thy pride by the sacrifice of thy senses, and even he will please thy humility with the sacrifice of thy pride: he will please thy intellect with the sacrifice of thy interest: and so that he can hold thee in any one of the meshes of his net, or take thee with any one of the hooks of his line, it mattereth not to him by which. But come, tell me when did public opinion, at its purest, persuade thee of the total corruption of human nature, and of the wickedness of the whole world, and of its being fit only for destruction? and when did public opinion tell thee of its own errors and veering changes? Yea, even so far it will go, as to affect humility and orthodoxy, to set up the Bible as the only truth, and orthodoxy as the only doctrine, and

morality as the only life. I was bred in such an atmosphere of public opinion. There is about as much of the earth as Gideon's fleece, which hath such a goodly style of it; and it pleased the Lord to appoint my birth in such a Goshen. But, taken at the best, as I have known her, public opinion is but a formalist, a formal Pharisee at the best; a hypocrite and dissembler, overawed perhaps by the presence of Christ, but hating him not the less, and ever ready to take occasion against Christ's servants, scandalising them, suspecting them, censuring them, ever suggesting the least possible service of God, and to those who would enter into it with the whole heart saying continually, "Be not over righteous," be moderate in all things. And therefore our Lord solemnly denounceth it: "Woe unto you when all men speak well of you. If you are of the world, the world will love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."

Take heed to what I say; for I am exposing to your sight the most powerful of all Satan's temptations, the idol of the time, the idol of the place, I may say the terror of all men; for I have met with very few, hardly one in a thousand, who can stand up in the face of public opinion and say, "I will do thus, say it or gainsay it who please." A sentence in a newspaper will cow a man's honesty more than an opened battery will his valour. It hath become the very necessary of men's life, to feed on the public opinion of their brethren. We are become an outward people, from the top to the bottom of the community; and therefore the word of God can make little or nothing of us. Can you make the unstable water change places with the immovable mountains, or the sands of the windy desert erect themselves into pillars of strength? So soon shall you make that spirit stand attentive and steadfast before the unchangeable word of God, which is accustomed to give way in the daily affairs of life to the changeable and expedient world. Nor let any man go to take out an exception for himself, as if he were exempt from the temptation. The man who feeleth and acknowledgeth it, is the man of whom there is some hope: the man who hath not felt, and doth not acknowledge it, is the man of whom there is no hope

for the present; and the man who addresseth himself to defend it, is the man of whom there is no hope at all. I preach it solemnly and advisedly, on the authority of the Lord, that there is no hope of any one who is given up to this outward authority and government of others. He hath no root in himself; he is a changeling: the seed of the word will as soon grow upon the salt sea as in his heart; the foam of the waves of the sea will as soon prove a nourishing soil to the seed of corn, as his stony and barren heart, his wavering and irresolute will, will prove a soil for the word of God. He is as chaff driven before the wind, and he shall not stand in the judgment.

Do you ask me what is the remedy? I ask you in return, do you believe that the disease is mortal? If you shuffle the question to a side, and will not answer directly, that you do believe it to be a deadly disease, I hold no further intercourse with you. For I am not here to soften down my Lord's peremptory words, or to dilute His gospel to please a diseased taste: which were to make myself obnoxious to the like condemnation; to unteach the lesson in the teaching of it; to do you harm, and to do myself harm, and to dishonour the gospel of the Lord. But if you admit that the spirit of world-pleasing is a spirit of death, and desire to know how you may be delivered from its thraldom, then hear what I have to say unto you from the Lord who bought you with His blood from the world's oppressor.

The world is to be destroyed, and the things that are therein, because they are altogether enmity to God. When Christ cometh in judgment, its bulwarks, its towers, and its high places, its pleasures and enjoyments, the noise of its viols, the vanity of its attire; its barns and storehouses; its courts, and palaces, and chambers of revelry; its pomp, and pride, and bravery, with all its flatteries, and lies, and dissimulations, shall be destroyed, along with every one who had pleasure therein: and there shall be a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness; and holiness unto the Lord shall be upon every person, and upon every object, and nothing shall enter thereinto which defileth or maketh a lie. Believest thou that in the regeneration all these things shall

be changed, the impure alloy purged out of them by fire; Satan, the spirit of corruption, who hath abused them, shall be cast out; a greater shall enter into his house and spoil his goods; and that greater is Christ, who shall exalt in that day those who have overcome the world, and cast down into hell those whom the world hath overcome? Believest thou this? I ask thee to believe it not as a figure, but as a reality; that the principles which now govern the world shall be subverted, and the powers which now hold it shall be overthrown; that righteousness shall be exalted, and the righteous shall have it in everlasting possession. And therefore thou art in love with death, thou art wedded to the grave, thou hast sold thyself to Satan, if thou abidest in the desire and love of the world as it now is. This is the infatuation with which we are possessed.

If thou thus believest, then thou mayest be delivered, but not without the Spirit of God. This word of doctrine which I have taught thee concerning the world's doom, and the transitory forms of Satan, who now usurpeth it, will work thy deliverance, being applied to thee by the Spirit. Now, a doctrine is applied by the Spirit, when it is present in our spirit at all times and in all seasons; lives in us, breathes in us, and in us hath a being. As it is the work of the Father to give us faith to receive a doctrine of Christ, so it is the work of the Spirit, to inspire us with the same, and make it a part of our breathing spirit. It is no more in you to sanctify the world and accomplish that redemption of it whereof I speak, than it is in you to become yourselves redeemed from its power. Thou art a part of that in which Satan sits supreme usurper; out of which part he must be cast by the same almightiness, by which he is to be cast out of the whole. Seest thou not that this sanctification of thyself is the pledge and earnest of the whole?

Satan therefore must first be cast out of thyself, and the world in thyself must be destroyed; thine eye veiled to its gaudiness, and opened to discern its worthlessness; thy mind taught to perceive its ignorance of God, and of Christ Jesus whom He hath sent; thy conscience quickened to feel its well-disguised deceptions; thy will renewed, so as to contend with

its desires and overcome them; and, in general, the law of the Spirit of life stirred up within thy mind, in opposition to the law of sin and death which is in thy members. It is a vain thing to expect that old Adam in thee will ever do better than love and desire this world which fell with him, and in his fall remaineth fallen. The new man-child of the Second Adam, by the regeneration of the Holy Ghost, must be born in thee, and brought up in thee by the ministry of the bread of life and water of salvation; that child whose communion is with the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, of whom also he is the offspring, as is set forth in the mystery of baptism. This new creature hath no congeniality with the world, is separate from the world, desireth the destruction of the world in its present state, and groaneth for its redemption into a better; and he intercedeth for the righteous men that are in it; but forasmuch as he loveth the Father, the love of the world is not in him. The old man of nature is his enemy, whom he bringeth under; the world is the field of battle in which he contends with him. He fights Satan on his own ground: he meets him in the wilderness which he hath made, and endures his temptations there. And when Satan offers him the kingdoms of this world, with all the glory of them, saying, They are mine, and I will give them thee, if only thou wilt bow down and worship me; he maketh answer unto him, "Get thee behind me, Satan; for thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." There is no other way of cure than the creation of a new heart, and a right spirit, which rejecteth the communion of the world, because the communion of the world hath rejected God.

But will God bestow upon me such a spirit? Surely He will. And how dost thou convince me thereof? By all His promises; and above all the rest, by the sacrament of baptism, which is constructed on very purpose to give thee this assurance; signifying thy death to visible things, and thy life to God, already accomplished in the mystery. Not a promise of, but an actual doing of it for thee, a full privilege of coheirship, and good title of inheritance; which if thou sue not out by prayer, and receive not by faith, then upon thine own head be the blame: for there it lay for thee, brought to thy

door, and thou didst not care to trouble thyself about it at all. There stood an empty seat for thee at the marriage supper, and thy marriage garment hung in the hall, and thou wast invited, but thou camest not. Therefore talk no more about His willingness, but look a little to thine own unwillingness.

But in what way, and by what means, will the Lord bestow this new man, in whose ever-present strength I shall be enabled to discern the world's frauds, and to resist the worldly powers successfully? By every way, and by all means; but above all others, by the preaching of the word—this very foolishness of preaching which I am now labouring to fulfil;—by this word which I am sowing in thy heart, and which thou art now hearing with gladness, if thou wilt give it patient attention, and not suffer it to be evaporated like the dew, dispersed like the morning cloud, or lost like water spilt upon the ground. If having been warned against that deadly enemy of souls, "the world;" that combination of anti-Christian powers, "the world;" thou wilt regard it as a cunning deceiver lying in wait to destroy,—Satan's masked artillery, ready to be opened upon thy bare bosom, his secret mines ready to be sprung beneath thine unwary feet. If thou wilt give ear to the voice of truth in thy conscience, however still and small, and prefer it to the whirlwind of the world's wrath, or the thunder shouts of its applause; if thou wilt dare to speak the truth to thy brother and friend, and to every neighbour, and to every man, come what will; if thou wilt dare to be singular for righteousness' sake, let the multitude say and do what they please; if thou wilt be patient in well-doing, for the recompense of reward, and labour for the rest which abideth to the people of God; if thou wilt search for thine inward approbation of God's good counsels, and find the depths of thine own spiritual being, and hold on a steady course to the appointed haven, through all storms, and clouds, and heading winds, believing in Christ thy Lord's omnipotency, and pressing onward; then, oh then, assuredly thou shalt become steadfast like a rock, and thy house be stable like a house that is founded upon a rock. But if thou goest to give way before the first temptation, and to give up all for lost the first brush thou hast with the enemy, to hang down

thy hands and despond, then what will happen? Why, thou wilt add another offence to the multitude; heap up to thyself still more certain and speedy destruction, and convert the word into thine accuser.

For why should the seed that I sow in a thousand souls be fruitful haply not in ten, perhaps not even in one? Not that it is not the true word: I know it to be the true and eternal verity of God: not because you believe it not, for the better part of you hear it with gladness; but because ye have not root in yourselves, and cannot withstand temptation. For the world is now grown so bad, that every man's life is his temptation. Perhaps your house, with its vanities, and its vain companies, and its worldliness; the education of your children, the modes of ordinary discourse, the very forms of affection, business; and, in short, every avocation of the world will act as a temptation. Therefore, be you ware. I want not your ear; I want not your acceptation, which I may have and be short of the one thing needful, which is your honest heart. If you have been honestly and truly convinced of any of these things which I have spoken concerning the wickedness of the world and its slaughter of all souls; concerning its own final destruction, and the triumph of the redeemed over it in the morning; concerning the work of the Spirit, to carry home the word, and His formation of a spiritual man to desire it, and delight in it; concerning any other thing which hath been incidentally touched or largely opened in this discourse, I do entreat you not to cast it to the winds, but to weigh it and to ponder it. Oh, receive it into the soil of a good and honest heart, that it may bring forth, some thirty, some sixty, some an hundred-fold.

Such is the holy truth, and most important lesson of this passage of Scripture, which I do commend to every one of you; for I am greatly deceived if every congregation of baptized persons, if every church of communicants, doth not contain many of these fair, but false professors. O brethren, I tremble for myself; (why should I not tremble for you also?) lest I should have only this joyful experience

of the word, and be thin of soil to hold it fast and ripen all its fruits? I fear there be a thousand forms of trial which would make me shrink worse than ever did Simon Peter. Among which, what do you think is that I fear the most? Not the sufferings of the flesh, which even nature can set at nought in a brave and loyal cause. Not the loss of property, of which I never had, nor ever cared to have any: nor the loss of worldly fame, which may blow its blast into any bosom for aught I care, except that I pity the fair garden on which it blows, like the east-wind, to nip its most hopeful buds and blight its fairest blossoms: but I fear you,—you whom God hath committed to my ministerial and pastoral care. I fear your smiles, and I fear your frowns; there is my snare; from which may the Lord deliver me without putting me to the proof; and if it be His holy will, perfect me without drinking of this cup: yet, not my will, O heavenly Father, but thine be done! And why fear I this so much? Because of the worldly intermixture which I perceive amongst us, and in the best of us; the abominable branch of our evil nature living still, out of which many a root of bitterness may grow to trouble our peace. Oh then, my brethren, as the husbandman taketh the use and service of winter to trench and pulverise the soil of his field, and catcheth the first approach of spring to sow it, and destroyeth every weed which he can come at without rooting up the plant also; I do entreat you, that we should employ this fair weather of opportunity, this sweet season of peace which we enjoy in our church, this morning of instruction, to give heed to our condition, to prune, to dress, to weed, to shelter, and do whatever offices we can by one another for our mutual peace and edification in godliness. And, by the blessing of God, I will do my part in preaching searching doctrine, and applying it to your conscience, which you must take in good part, suffering the exhortation, suffering the rebuke: for why may we not grow up in love and mutual ministry of helpfulness to the full stature of the perfection of Christ,—a body wherein every one hath his place appointed him of the Spirit, like the various joints of the body, articulated into one another, and giving activity and strength to the whole? Such let us be to one another, full of

gravity, full of deep feeling and penetrating truth, avoiding flatteries, complimentary speeches, foolish words, expedient measures, every man speaking the truth with his neighbour, as the elect of God.

And what I say I say to the whole Church of Christ, that they should be looking to their armour, which these times of peaceful flattery have rusted; and try its several pieces, and burnish them for the battle, and close the rivets in their armour up; above all, looking to their shield of faith, whether it be arrow-proof, proof against the fiery darts of the devil. For I greatly err if they will not find the rust of formality, and the eating rust of expediency, to have consumed the massy pieces with which heretofore the Reformers of this land were clothed for battle in the times of old. There are no tests of the true men from the false. The soul-searching discourse hath ceased, experimental religion is a thing dug for amongst the sermons of a former age: preaching is itself a taste, a pleasure, an entertainment, a relish of doctrine; not a meal of meat to the hungry, or a slaking draught to the thirsty. There is no discussion, there is no handling of the matter, there is a dearth of things old, and a want of things new. The old wine contained in the bottles of our standards is diluted with a thousand measures of water, until its very taste and colour, and surely all its strength, are gone; and the new wine of the kingdom to come is entertained only by a few, and disgusts the taste of the many; and the Church is a miserable gathering of meagre men, the best of whom are but as the shadow of the warriors which have been in the days of old.

LECTURE III.

THE SEED WHICH FELL AMONG THORNS, AND WAS CHOKED BEFORE IT COULD BRING FORTH FRUIT.

HAVING, in our former discourses upon this parable, been led to study it carefully, we have been mightily impressed with the deep wisdom which is contained in it, concerning the threefold varieties of human character and human temptation, and the exact correspondence of the effects which the history of preaching in every age of the Church hath revealed; namely, first, the proud and high-minded, who reject it hastily, through their much communion with Satan, that prince of all knowledge where God is not known, of all power where God is not acknowledged, and bright archangel of the natural man: who is now revealing himself in his angelic glories of natural knowledge, natural beauty, natural wisdom, natural freedom, and natural humanity, and mightily prevailing in these lands and in this city against us the ministers of the poor and humbled Jesus; whom, methinks, we should likewise array in His superangelic glory about to be revealed of King of kings, and Lord of lords, in order to expel Satan from this mundane sphere; and proclaim Him, in the teeth of the usurpation, as the Sun of Righteousness, about to arise and eclipse that Lucifer son of the morning: for we be ministers not only of the Son of man, but of the Son of God; not only of the Word which was made flesh, but of the Word of God, which shall yet issue out of heaven, accompanied with all the heavenly host, inscribed on His vesture and on His thigh with these words, "King of kings, and Lord of lords;" and thus, by taking to ourselves all the weapons of our warfare, we might have some chance of defeating the enemy under that brilliant and potent disguise of radiant knowledge, which in

these latter times he hath assumed, and might obtain some audience, if not some root for the seed of the word of the gospel of Christ, amongst that numerous class of learned men who now trample it under foot, as the precious grains of wheat are trodden on the highway, or suffer it to be borne away by the soaring ambitions of the natural spirit, as the seed scattered by the wayside is carried away by the fowls of heaven.

Secondly, The vain, outward, showy, and changeful members of this world's society, whose idol is not in the invisible mind, or its fallen yet stately grandeur, but in the visible world, that is, in the fellowship and friendship and approbation of human society; who are political with the politicians of this world's kingdoms, delighting in its courtly flatteries, ambitious of its places, vain of its distinctions, proud of its ornaments, and, in one word, satisfied with the sufficiency of its portion; which is an inferior sphere of man to the former: for in that we commune with thoughts and ideas, and desires, which have no outward similitude or form, but exist in the spirit, and for the spirit, and out of which heretofore was constructed the temple of contemplation, and meditation, and other Sabbath occupations, where the soul once did see and feel the present word and Spirit of God, but where now she findeth only Satan and his angels to be present, until she be redeemed and ransomed into the bright hope and opening possession of her unfallen blessedness. Whereas this second class of natural men be content with just so many of those thoughts and ideas of the mind as can be realised in human life, and made visible in human society, which are so few, so coarse, and little equal to the dignity of human nature, that the sages and philosophers, and poets and moralists, of all ages and countries, have rather retired from their degradation than courted their possession: but, alas! they are the heaven of the multitude, who know no higher philosophy than usefulness and comfort; no diviner law than expediency and advantage; no finer strain of poetry than the description of the tossing passions or gentle affections of the mind, of the rugged, or sublime, or beautiful forms of nature; who know no deeper morality than prudence and convenience, so that to them the coarse machine of human life, with all its confusion,

suffering, disease, and death, this threescore-and-ten-years' lease of existence, this daily, hourly, uncertainty of being is enough—base spirits!—is enough to content that soul which was made in the image of God, and, as it were, the mirror of His various excellency. These worldly spirits cannot arise into the divine purities of the spiritual life revealed in the gospel, cannot comprehend the holiness, the righteousness, and the goodness of the law of God; nor receive the light and liberty, and wisdom and knowledge, of the gospel of Christ; nor admire the love and peace, and joy and forgiveness, and meekness of the Holy Ghost; nor can they forsake the worldly kingdom, for the kingdom to come; nor be content as pilgrims and strangers to wait for their citizenship from heaven: and this spirit of worldly society cannot enter into the mystery of the communion of saints, and fellowship of the holy catholic Church; neither, when these mysteries are propounded to them, do they utterly reject them as the former; but because human society, which they admire as their heaven, containeth a somewhat rude resemblance of that heavenly society which we present to them, they do give us ear, but not being able to enter into the sublimity and purity of our doctrine, from their cleaving to the worldly spirit, they debase the doctrine to the measure of their own capacity, stand with it so long as it will stand with them, and go with it so far as it will go with them. But when persecution ariseth on account of the faith; that is, when it requireth of them any sacrifice of that worldly society wherein they have their pleasure; then straightway they are offended and fall away, because they had no root in themselves, neither were rooted in the great vine of spiritual life, but were branches of that corrupt tree which bringeth forth corrupt fruit—that vine of the earth to whose root the axe is ready to be applied, and whose clusters are now ripe for the wine-press of Almighty God.

The third class, to whom our commission now is opened,—for we have discoursed at length to the two former,—is a yet lower, though a more numerous class than the others, consisting of the labourers and workmen, rich and poor; the burden-bearers, and office-holders of that worldly society, in the favour and good opinion of which the former class

delighted,—the men who labour the earth for its food, who prepare in a thousand forms its nourishment, who consult its taste, and provide the materials for gratifying it, and who become so engrossed with their several pursuits, and so consumed by the anxieties of profit and of loss, so taken with the ingenuities of their various crafts, and, in short, so lost in the turmoil of active business, that their souls have not the time, nor the elevation, and at length lose even the capacity for spiritual subjects. The farmer being taken up with his ploughs and yokes of oxen, the merchant with his merchandise, and the mechanic with his tools, and the labourer with his sorrowful labour; the poor with providing daily bread; and the prosperous with building storehouses wherein to bestow his goods; it happeneth through all the varieties of the busy world, that the messenger of God calleth, but they answer not. He charmeth; but their ear, like the deaf adder's, is shut to the voice of his charming, charm he never so wisely: they are bidden to the marriage supper and feast which the king hath made in honour of his son's espousals; but they are all otherwise engaged and cannot come: they are bidden the second time; but still they cannot come, until, at an hour when they expect not, fire cometh at length from the outworn patience of God and consumeth them, and their cities, and their works of art, and their good of merchandise, and their painted pictures, and their stately buildings, and all the beauty, and all the fruitfulness, and all the wealth with which the cunning and busy hand of man doth cover the face of the earth.

To this third class is devoted the third part of the parable, and that truly which concerneth us the most, wherein, under the similitude of thorns, are set forth the cares and riches and pleasures of this life; and under the similitude of seed falling amongst those thorns, is set forth the preaching of the gospel unto the men who are all occupied by these worldly charges; and under the similitude of the choking of that precious seed by these thorns, so that not one particle thereof brought fruit to perfection, is set forth the fatal result which all ministers of the gospel so constantly lament, and which all honest hearers of the gospel do also lament, namely, that though

you know and allow the truth of what we preach, and will not justify yourselves for the neglect of it, but are, on the other hand, continually sighing and longing and looking for fruit, yet fruit bear you little or none, and at the end of the month, and at the end of the year, yea, and after many years, and at the end of life itself, you find yourselves as barren and fruitless as at the beginning; or, if in anything you differ from your outset, more helpless and hopeless with respect to that harvest which the Sower, when He cometh as a harvest-man or reaper, will require of every field, that is, of every spirit, in which the seed of His precious word was sown. And it is my high office, dearly beloved, and my very weighty commission from the Lord, to teach you the causes of that barrenness of soul, which we lament in common, and whereof our Lord has graciously instructed us in the third part of this parable, which is now the subject of our discourse.

And may the Lord, who spoke this parable unto His disciples, and likewise unto the multitude, of whom neither the one nor the other at first understood it, and who graciously interpreted the same to His disciples, that they might after His decease interpret it unto His Church,—may that gracious Lord, whose servant I am, and minister to this people, grant unto me the same revelation in this mystery of the kingdom, which He granted unto them from His own ever blessed lips, and the same Holy Spirit of interpretation which He poured out upon them on the day of Pentecost, and hath ever since continued in His Church, that we may at this time, and at all times, but especially at this time, prevail to warn you busy and careful men of the snares and temptations and effectual hindrances of the gospel, whereby your spirits are taken captive, deluded, and chained, and cannot be enlarged until some minister of grace be strengthened of the Holy Ghost to shew you your perilous condition, and move you to desire the enlargement and liberty of the sons of God!

And now, that we may take up this part of our subject also in order, and treat it with a fulness of detail requisite to its own importance and its necessity to the spiritual well-being of busy men, let us attend carefully to the very words

of our Lord, as they are three times recorded in the gospel, and endeavour to comprehend the substance of this temptation against which He warneth His Church. Ver. 7—"And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it." Ver. 14—"And that which fell among thorns, are they which when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches, and pleasures of this life, and bring forth no fruit unto perfection." And in Matt. xiii. 7—"And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up and choked them." Ver. 22—"He also that received seed among the thorns, is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful." In Mark—"And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful." Our Lord presenteth to us three distinct things—"The cares of this life," "the deceitfulness of riches," and the "pleasures of this life," which are related to one another, as the root and the branches and the fruits of one great tree of worldliness;—the root being in "the cares of this life," or, according to Matthew, "the care of this world;" or, according to Mark, "the cares of this world;" by which, I understand in general, that anxiety of mind, with which every man is beset concerning the means of life, what he shall eat, what he shall drink, and wherewithal he shall be clothed; and likewise the higher and nobler anxieties of fathers and mothers, and children, and relations and friends, towards the various objects of their affection and care; with whatever else within the compass of the visible world is desired and longed after by the nature of man from the cradle to the grave. Out of this universal and common attribute of our fallen soul, here called "the care of this world," there arise and shoot forth various desires after worldly things, that we might possess them, and, by possessing them, secure ourselves, as we fondly dream, against the gnawings of care; of which the chief, and, as it were, the representative of all the rest, is the desire of the "riches of this life;" or, as it is in Matthew and Mark, "the deceitfulness of riches:" by which I understand the Lord to warn men, not only against the evil effects of riches possessed, but

also the evil effects of riches desired and pursued: and it doth thus include a very large portion of mankind, especially in this age and in this city, where methinks the desire to be rich, though the basest and most ignoble of all our passions, hath fairly won the rule and mastery of our life, and is preparing for us such a bed of thorns, both as individuals and as a nation, as few men do dream of, as hardly any man will believe; for the proverb by which we steer our course, is no longer that of Solomon, "Righteousness exalteth a nation," but that of our political economists, "Wealth exalteth a nation." And when I look into this city, and see the earnest and vehement pursuit of gain, and read the word of our Lord, "It is as impossible for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle as for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven;" and when I look into the daily writings upon which the mind of this people feedeth, and see how the spirit of gain, and the means of gain, and the history of gain and of loss, are the chief topics therein treated of; when I hear the same echoed in every man's discourse, the burden of senatorial debates, the great theme of popular outcry and grievance, yea, and the great desire of nations, and, impressed with the universality and supremacy of this passion and pursuit, do turn to the word of God, and find these words written—"But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition: for the love of money is the root of all evil; which, while some have coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows;"—when this I see and think upon, I am confounded and amazed how far the world is gone astray from the way of God's commandments: and I feel the burden of the subject so very great, that nothing could enhearten me to contend with it but the encouragement of the Lord, that He sendeth no one a warfare on his own charges—that His "grace is sufficient for us," and that "His strength is perfected in our weakness," and His especial promise unto the ministers of His Church, "Behold I am with you unto the end of the world;" and, moreover, the necessity of the case doth oblige me, the utter hopelessness of your salvation, the utter inefficacy of my preaching, or of any

man's preaching, yea, of the word of God itself, while ye are under this master-spirit: for is it not written, "No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other: ye cannot serve God and mammon?"

Nor is our Lord's doctrine yet exhausted, who warneth His Church not only against these branching desires which come from the root of care, but also against the poisonous fruits they bear, which He denominates "the pleasures of this life;" or, as Mark hath it, "the lusts of other things," which "enter in and choke the word;" whereby we understand "the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eye, the pride of life," and every other bodily and visible thing which the possession of riches enables us to possess, and by which the desire of riches is gratified and fostered in the soul, and the principle of carefulness is strengthened. These are the prizes and rewards which mammon holds out to the youth, that he may win them from the service of God and their Redeemer, and chain them to his golden car, and make them ministers in his lustful temple. He promiseth them ease of body after a season, during which he exhausts their strength and consumes their health in every clime from pole to pole, with every base, venial, and villainous occupation,—to fight in blood, to work in the dark bowels of the earth, to deal in stratagems and wiles; and for guerdon he giveth, to one perhaps in a hundred of the adventurers, a little dust, and saith, "There is thy hire; take now thine ease and be merry;" when the mocking fiend knoweth that the body of his slave is filled with disease, his mind with care, and his whole soul with habitudes which will enslave him to sorrow and pain more perhaps than he was heretofore enslaved to toil and trouble; and while their former master mocks and derides these pensioners whom he has thus set aside when they could serve him no longer; perhaps at that very time the angel of the Lord cometh, and saith unto them, "This night, O fool! thy soul is required of thee;" "What is a man profited if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" Nevertheless, brethren, be ye witnesses, that "the pleasures of this life," and "the lusts of other things," which are thought to be within the power of riches, are the great

stimulants which drive on that stern and unrelenting warfare which you wage with the obstacles and disappointments of life. It is the appetite of the body for future ease, that maketh it submit to present drudgery; it is the appetite of the body for future indulgence, that makes it submit to present privations; it is hope basely limiting itself to the barren and uncertain prospect of visible things; it is the want of faith in things invisible and eternal, which drives on this unwearied warfare, and fosters these bad passions in the soul. It is a system of earthliness which hath its great moving spring in the power which things visible have acquired over the fallen soul; which hath its fruit in the still further debasement and degradation of the soul, by the long and laborious pursuit of things seen and temporal, and the base, corrupting, and pestilential enjoyment of the sensual and vain pleasures which they bring within our reach. The care of the world is the root of it; the desire and pursuit of riches are the stem and branches of it; and the pleasures of life, and lusts of the things which life containeth, are the fruit of it. So that it is, in truth, the whole system of worldliness which the Lord openeth to our consideration in this third part of the parable, and to the consideration of which we shall devote ourselves with all diligence, according as He giveth to us the ability, praying your patient and careful hearing throughout the whole of the great subject which we have sketched out.

And that I may observe some order and method in this large subject, I shall endeavour, first, to shew unto you the root and principle of care, and the proneness which there is towards it in all human pursuits; secondly, I shall trace out the way in which it works the effect ascribed to it in the parable, of choking the seed of the word, and preventing the fruits of the kingdom; and, thirdly, I shall endeavour to shew you the only radical cure which there is for this malady of our fallen estate.

I.—THE EVIL.

I. The cares of this life, the cares of this world, or, as Mark more beautifully expresseth it, the care of this world, is that concerning which we are first to discourse, and against which

we are to warn all this Christian people, as that with which the care of the world to come cannot dwell in the same bosom; a large and copious subject of discourse, and coming home to the case of every man; for who is there born into this world that is not born to the burden of its cares? A great care it is, and enough for the occupation of the far greater portion of mankind, to provide for the wants of the body, daily, yea, hourly, recurring upon us. And this our Lord counteth so much upon, that in His Sermon on the Mount, when touching this matter of care, He condescendeth to name no other; saying, "Take no thought for to-morrow, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, or wherewithal ye shall be clothed." And, truly, in whatever state society is found, from the simplest to the most refined, this care of bodily necessities, to ourselves and to our children, is by far the greatest in amount, and will merit a chief observation in this discourse; but upon this root springeth, in civilised life, a stately tree, which beareth many cares, kindred and congenial with that which gave them birth;—these are the varieties of meats and drinks, which profit not the soul; the varieties of apparel, which minister no comfort to the body, but much incense to our vanity; accommodations of the house, elegancies of the household establishment, and a thousand other things whereby the living of a nobleman or a gentleman is distinguished from that of a peasant; of which grafts and shoots upon the stock of our common nature, every one beareth cares for its fruit, and requireth a certain nourishment of the anxious and thoughtful mind, whereby it cometh to pass that the rich in this world's goods, so far from being delivered from the snare in which the poor man's foot is holden, are, as it were, surrounded and enclosed in the meshes and folds of a strongly-woven net, and standeth in greater jeopardy of their life than he: wherefore it is a mistake to think that any class of men are exempted from this common cause of care,—the daily necessities of life, from which mammon bringeth no deliverance, nor the world, nor anything that is in the world,—everything being the occasion of carefulness unto the soul of man, until it be delivered by that faith which overcometh the world, and is alone intent on

the kingdom of heaven and its righteousness, knowing that all these visible things shall be added thereunto.

There is another common ground of care from the highest to the lowest degree of men, which is the wants, not of their animal, but of their social nature: for no one is born as Adam was created at first, indebted only to God for his being; and even for Adam, though without a spot of sin, or any care, or any want, it was not good to be alone; but we are born linked and united in the very fibres of our being to many others who in time become objects of care to us, and to whom we are objects of the dearest care so soon as we see the light. And as we grow in years, and become the fellows and companions and servants and masters of a new generation, straightway, to the cares that come upon us from the generation that gave us birth, there are added the cares of this world's business and government, which our fathers resign into our hands; and a little further onward in the journey of this mortal life, we become authors to ourselves of the cares of another generation, sprung from our loins: and so it fareth with us from generation to generation, that we are burdened with the care not of ourselves, but of many others, from which we cannot escape by any act of stern resolution, or stoical pride, without turning the milk of our nature into sourness, or making our abode in the cold and solitary regions of pride, or sinking into the depths of indifference and apathy towards our kind, unless, indeed, which is the only cure, we are enabled by faith to enter into the mystery of God's fatherly providence, and repose our souls with security upon His care.

Oh, how intricate and interwoven is this net of carefulness, in which the spirits of men are taken captive! It reacheth unto all; it is around all; it is Satan's snare for catching all. If I look into my own breast, and observe what passeth therein continually, that is, to what my nature is ever inclined, I find from the opening of my eyelids in the morning, until their closing in unconscious sleep, that faster and more plentiful than motes in the sunbeam, cares succeed each other, and float about in the light of intelligence which is within me; and Satan will not give me leisure for a morning or evening prayer, but he will be interposing, between the

eye of my faith and the heaven of my desires, some phantom of worldly care or interest, the ghost of something past, or the shadow of something coming, or the substance of something present; and yet I am not a man like many here present, loaded with worldly charges, but exempted from them by the nature of my calling, and desirous in my spirit to keep myself exempt: but I do find that my natural eye loveth not more the light, or an object to look upon, than my natural man loveth an object in this world to hope, or fear, or desire; and I do moreover find that there is no deliverance in nature; that the understanding hath its cares in the objects of knowledge; that the heart hath its cares in the objects of affection; that every profession is filled with worldly cares, which will not be kept out by the gratings of the convent, as our pious fathers vainly thought, which will not be kept out by the untrodden solitudes of the hermitage, nay, which will not be exorcised from the closet by the voice of solemn prayer, but haunt sick men's couches, and sit heavy upon the dying man's breast, and would seem almost to follow us into the grave; and I wonder not at the superstition of the Romanist, which feigneth that the fires of purgatory are needed to separate this earthy intermixture from the soul before it be fit to ascend into the pure abodes of the blessed.

Seeing, then, that this subject toucheth us all so closely, revealing that troublous sea into which every man is cast at his birth to swim for his life, we do well, like men earnestly desiring to be delivered from these many waters of evil, and planted upon a rock, to consider the causes which have brought us into this jeopardy of our life; the fatal issues of abiding therein; and the only way of deliverance which the Lord, in His grace, hath revealed. And, as to the causes which entwine these cares with our natural being, I observe, that they are no less than the preservation, the well-being, and the happiness of this our present estate. It is not that the mind naturally loveth care on its own account, from which, indeed, it would rather be delivered, for the enjoyment of its own will and pleasure; but that without care nothing will proceed well in the outward world, which is very obstinate and entangled, like the wild forest and the woody thicket, and cannot be

brought into regular and productive courses, but by much husbandry and economy and care; yea, and the soul itself, if suffered to grow according to its own will and pleasure, doth likewise become overrun with the weeds of idleness, and infested with the brood of evil and wicked passions. And what were a family without the care of a thrifty wife and industrious husband? and what were any concern of business without the care of a head master and inferior servants? and what were a state without the watchful care of its governors? and what were laws without the diligence of magistrates? and what were the rising generation without the labour and care of teachers? and, in short, of what worth were the existence and well-being of society without the care to maintain it on the part of those who enjoy it? As the beautiful garden and well cultivated fields would, but for the hand of man, soon return under the dominion of the curse and become a sterile wilderness, so would the regularity and peace and concord of society, without the dutiful cares of men, return to the rudeness and ferocity and wild disorder of savage life. The causes, therefore, of care are deeply seated and wide-spread in the natural wants and advantages of human life; and while the objects of this world continue the chief or only objects of the soul, it were not only a vain but a very unwise thing to call upon men to suspend their cares,—for it could lead only to improvidence, waste, idleness, and disorder, against which the commandments of the gospel are set in direct opposition. "He that will not work," saith the apostle, "neither should he eat." "He that provideth not for his own, especially those of his own house, hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." To him who hath no higher object than this world, care is the certain portion; and, as it were, the present price with which its future goods are purchased: it is his pain, it is his penalty for want of faith on the providence of God, and the world unseen; and while this faith is unpossessed, his soul must have the tortures of anxiety, and the pains of disappointment, and the sufferings of loss and defeat. The moralist may do his best to regulate, but he cannot deliver the soul of men from this evil agitation; for while men have hope, it must look forward to something; while they have desire, it must fasten

upon something; and if there be nothing assured to them by faith beyond the grave, and above the world, then upon this side the grave, and upon the world, their desires must rest: and if in my wife and child I know nothing immortal and eternal, whereon to fix my love, and in the fixed fellowship of which to defy time and change, what can I do but fix it upon that visible transient being, this natural existence, in the mysteries of which we have become acquainted together, and with all the uncertainties of which our acquaintances must be disturbed? If there be a cure therefore for care, it is not in things visible: its remedy is not in the understanding, nor within the resources of man; for, as hath been said, everything is full of care, and, as hath been shewn, nothing can proceed without it.

To which agree the words of our Lord; and this is the spirit of His discourse, when treating the subject of care and forethought, in His Sermon on the Mount. "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." He deduceth His exhortation as a consequence from this proposition, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." "*Therefore* I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?" Whence we gather assuredly that He regarded even the most necessary of human cares as a virtual acknowledgment of the mastery of mammon, and renunciation of the mastery of God, which is the very conclusion at which we have arrived from the above premises; but in our Lord's discourse there are many touches of deep wisdom, and appeals of great power, which we cannot pass without noticing. The first in these words, "Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?" That is, Think you that the Lord who gave the life, and so marvellously endowed it with the mysterious power of turning all things to its sustenance and enjoyment, would stop short in His work, and not also give the material substances, the corn and the wine and the oil, on which it is to be sustained? that He would construct the machine with-

out any work to do? that He would prepare the apparatus of a living creature that it might forthwith perish? Then neither were He wise nor were He fatherly. A foolish man would not, or none but a foolish man would, waste his ingenuity in constructing devices of genius which were destined the next instant to be destroyed by his own hand. O ye faithless men! and have ye life; have ye this organised body, this most consummate of the works of God, and masterpiece of His creation, which containeth lodged within it the royal mind, and is born to have dominion over all earthly things; and doubt ye that He will give you grains of corn to feed it withal, or materials of covering to protect it from the winter's cold? Ye men of little faith, do "behold the fowls of the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?" That is, they mingle not distrust with their diligence, and give no signs of over-carefulness in making their provision. They forestal not the course of Providence, nor seek to place themselves independent of the next year's chances, or of the chances of many years, to take pledges and securities against God's failing them, and enter into a covenant with change and alteration, so as to set themselves above all risk, into the state and condition of the Unchangeable. He meaneth not that the birds of the air are loiterers, but that they are not hoarders: He meaneth not that they are so unwise or improvident as to think of doing without their instincts of seeking their food and building their nest, and providing for their young; but that, while they occupy all these gifts proper to their condition among the creatures, they seek not to shove Providence out, or do without their Creator's help, but trust that spring would bring the seeds to feed upon, and summer the heat for rearing their young, and autumn continue the store for feeding them.

And so also would He have each man to put forth his understanding, or the faculty whereby he hath insight into and power over the matters of the earth; which, let me tell you, is but his higher instinct for constructing his house, and seeking his provisions, and doing whatever else is necessary to subdue the earth over which he holdeth now a sullen and

obstinate dominion. But not, in the pride of these higher instincts, to think of shutting out the help and co-operation, the supremacy and dispensation, of his Maker, with whom, for the express purpose of holding communion, he hath his higher faculty of reason. And to shew the utter arrogancy of man in thus seeking to set himself independent of his Maker, and to mark the small bounds of his power, he puts the question, "Which of you, by taking thought, can add one cubit to his stature?" That is, to what amounteth all this care about the body, and its accommodations, and all the proud boastfulness consequent thereon? Can you make it a cubit higher with all your thought? Can you change the laws of life or of death, of health or of disease, with your thought and carefulness? What a deep philosophy there is in this question, if men would but give it their study! and how would it disabuse them of their pride in natural science, and bring them back again to the humility of faith and truth! The lesson is this, that man, by all his resources of knowledge and art, cannot create anything new upon the earth, or give new properties to anything created, but merely work upon those properties which they have had since the world began. He doth not make the sun to shine forth in summer, but only provideth all things for his coming: he doth not give the earth or the manure of the earth their faculty of conveying the moisture of the heavens with kindly ministry to the roots of plants and herbs: he doth not give to the seed her quality of reproducing her kind: he doth not give to the wheat its faculty of nourishment, or to the grass its cheerfulness, or to the fleece its warmth, or to the body any organ, faculty, or power of various life. And why thy boasting, fool! when thou art working in another's workshop, and forging with another's tools, and using his wonderful machines, whereof thou understandest not one, no not a single one, and thou callest them thine own, and boastest thyself as if thou wert the creator and deviser of them all! Canst thou, by taking thought, add a cubit to thy stature? I wish I could teach these recreant renegadoes called men of science this lesson. I would they would set to work and make us a little flesh out of bread and water, or quicken us a little which is dead, or do some feat of their own worthy of being talked

about, with all their philosophy, mechanical and chemical. Why can they not help us in a famine, or create us a little gold for the starved currency, or do something worthy of a name? And who helpeth them to that chief part of every operation in which they cannot help themselves? It is nature. Well, then, let them give nature her due worship, and not take it all to themselves, the boastful crew. What temples build they to her? what worship offer they to her? They cheat her also. They would not only deprive us of our God and Father, but they will deprive their own goddess of reason, or nature, in order that they may have all to the credit of their own individual science and skilfulness.

This rebuke, contained in the words, "Which of you, by taking thought, can add a cubit to his stature?" which I apply to those arrogant classes, I apply to all who follow the same practice in principle, though you would shrink from the arrogant declaration of it in words. But let me ask the labourer, Who refreshed his body over night, and laid in those stores of strength for another day? Was it not the wonder-working Spirit of God, that refresheth the face of every man with sleep? But let me ask the careful mother, Who gave, and who hath preserved, the lives of her children, for whom she is busy and careful all the day long? And if they are God's heritage, and His reward, why doth she not acknowledge His most goodly gifts, when with a mother's fondness she decketh their youthful pride? But I would ask the trader, Who opens and shuts the channels of trading, and causeth those wants to be felt whereto he ministers, and who giveth its virtue to the ocean to bear our merchant-navies, and to the wind to waft them into distant parts? But I would say unto the merchant, And hast thou too so soon forgotten that Invisible Power which took thee and all thy brethren, and scattered ye like chaff; your bills, bonds, and securities, securing you nothing at all? O men and brethren, put that question oft unto yourselves, "Can I, by taking thought, add a cubit to my stature?" And when thou meditatest the small hand which thou hast, and the great hand which God hath in the future, turn thy cares into prayers, and let thy anxious solicitudes be changed for fervent supplications; according to

the word of the apostle, "Be careful for nothing, but in everything, by prayer and supplication, let thy requests be made known unto God; and the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

To which our Lord addeth this rebuke, "For after all those things do the Gentiles seek." He spoke unto His disciples, and said, that they were no better than the Gentiles in seeking after those things; and that their seeking after a higher thing, and leaving these lower things to come at their own time, and in their own course, was a mark which He wished to be the distinction of His disciples. And what might these heathenish requests and pursuits be, from the fellowship of which the Lord discharged believers? Was it the pursuit of wealth, of hundreds and thousands laid up in store? the pursuit of worldly offices and ambitious distinctions, of sounding titles and magisterial places? You shall hear and judge for yourselves. "Therefore take no thought, saying What shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewithal shall we be clothed? For after all these things do the Gentiles seek." So that it is heathenish to be careful about daily necessities, it is like a Gentile to be anxious about the common apparel wherewithal to clothe our nakedness or comfort our bodies. For, brethren, so saith the Lord, that these commonest and most excusable desires are heathenish. And what shall I say to the anxieties of multitudes who hear me, how they shall maintain this rank, and that appearance; how they shall accumulate such a store, and make sure of such an annual income? That it is heathenish, and not Christian; yea, that it is very heathenish, and very unchristian. But what, then, are we to do in order to put ourselves and keep ourselves within the pale of honest men? Do! do what you now do: be honest and industrious, and use your faculties which God hath given you, for the ends for which He hath given them. You did not think the Lord meant you to be idle vagabonds: did you? The fowls of the air are not idle, the lilies of the field are not thriftless. No. But He meant you not to be care-worn as well as toil-worn; the understanding, or the instincts of the sense, He would have given to

the creatures which they were meant to govern; but the soul given to Him in a continual trust and confidence and faith: for, saith He, "your heavenly Father knoweth ye have need of these things." Therefore trust Him. He hath not called you into His Church from the Gentile world for naught; and having made you His chosen ones, think you He will forsake and desert you? Having chosen you to manifest His glory, think you He will let you die without manifesting that glory? Having given you His Son, as your special gift, that He will refuse you the daily bread which He giveth unto all men, and which He refuseth not to the beasts of the earth, nor to the fowls of the air? This were preposterous in the highest.

Nay, saith the Lord, leave these lesser matters unto Him, and set your hearts upon a higher mark, which is proper to your highest calling, and worthy of your most earnest request, "Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven, and its righteousness; and all these things shall be added thereunto." When the Lord called in the care and anxiety and desire of His people from the kingdom of the present world, as wholly unworthy of their pursuit, He did not leave them without another kingdom on which these affections might be worthily employed, which He nameth the kingdom of heaven; that is the kingdom to come, whereof we are heirs, and to the inheritance of which we shall be raised up to enter along with our risen Lord. This kingdom we cannot presently possess save in faith and hope; because it is not seen, and because it is yet future. And for this inheritance it is that we continue strangers and pilgrims in the present evil word, patiently looking for a city whose builder and whose maker is God. And why should I, who am promised the inheritance of the earth, strive for one of its fields, or care for one of its clayey mansions? And why should I, who shall see God, and see Him as He is, no despised man in weeds of sorrow, but a King in His beauty, care for the fear and favour of the great ones and beautiful ones of the earth? And shall I, who am the son of the King of kings, and heir-apparent to a crown of glory, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, care for worldly distinctions or courtly preferments, or aught appertaining to the rebel and corrupt vice-sovereignties of this earth? Thus

it is the believer, embodying to himself that future reign of glory which awaiteth him, seeketh earnestly to be possessed of it in the good time and pleasure of the Lord, and in the faith thereof is content to pass all-unnoticed, all-despised and trodden on, through the valley of humility and sorrow, which his Lord walked in before him. One present possession only he desireth, the righteousness of that kingdom, which is its earnest, and the seal of admission to its glory. For unless a man be born again, of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. "Not every one that saith, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." It is the meek only that shall inherit the earth, the pure in heart only that shall see God, the peacemaker that shall be called the children of God, the merciful that shall obtain mercy, &c. And these fruits of the Spirit, which the Lord hath presently to bestow, this Spirit of power and of love, and of a sound mind, with which He baptizeth all true believers; these gifts which He hath received for men, even the rebellious, are absolutely necessary to prepare the way for God's dwelling in the midst of us. These the believer earnestly coveteth after, because they are the desire of his soul. For these he prayeth and intercedeth continually. He is never filled with a sufficiency of this good gift: he desireth to increase it more and more for ever; according to that which is written by the apostle Paul, in his First Epistle to Timothy; which, though it be addressed to an evangelist, is equally applicable to all evangelical men, and with which I shall conclude the statement of the evil. "For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil; which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast

professed a good profession before many witnesses," (1 Tim. vi. 7-12.)

II.—THE EFFECT.

Having now shewed, that carefulness is not only the hereditary portion of every child of Adam, but the necessary element of every worldly undertaking which would hope for success; the attendant on every worldly pursuit, and the indispensable condition to the world's well-being;—also, that there is no deliverance from it in human things nor in the region of human thought; for the more you possess of the world's goods, and the more you embrace within the compass of your desires, just in that proportion are you the more compassed about with anxiety, and laden with the greater burden of care;—we are now to inquire, in the second place, into the effect of these worldly cares upon the soul working so as to disqualify it for spiritual attainments and render ineffectual the hearing of the word and the other means of grace; which evil effect is set forth in the text by the similitude of the thorns choking the seed that fell in the midst of them: and this of the care of this world upon the spiritual part of man, I perceive to be twofold,—the first arising from the unnatural and degrading union of a spirit to worldly and material things;—the second arising from the suspending of the soul's faith, hope, and desire, upon things which are, and must ever be, uncertain and far removed beyond her control. These two points we shall handle with great solicitude for your emancipation from the curse; and we pray the Lord, that, seeing He hath called us to minister unto men of understanding, who are much occupied with worldly charges, He would grant us the spirit of understanding, to unveil this mystery of iniquity with which they are daily tempted withal; and we likewise pray the Lord, that as He hath blessed us above measure with the patient and affectionate ear of these His people, He would, through our lips, pour out upon them abundantly of the wisdom which is from above, that they may become wise unto salvation, and able to withstand all the wiles of the devil.

1. We are, then, by the grace of God, to shew unto you how the careful spirit which is troubled about many worldly things, is thereby disinclined from the hearing and the understanding

of the word of truth, from "the one thing needful," and "the good portion which shall not be taken from us." This ariseth directly from the diversity and entire opposition which there is between the world that is, and the world that is to come;—the kingdom of Satan that is seen, and the kingdom of heaven that is hoped for: for Satan is confessedly the master of the visible world, according to his own assertion, when he shewed unto Christ all the kingdoms of it, saying, "All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them, for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it." And as surely is Christ the Lord and Master of the kingdom to come, according to the prophecy of Isaiah: "The government shall be upon his shoulders, and his name shall be called Wonderful, the Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Father *of the age to come*, the Prince of Peace;" into the inheritance of which He entered after His resurrection, according to His saying, "All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth:" and according to that other saying of St Paul: "Wherefore also God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Nevertheless, though Jesus is virtually King of things visible, and as the King of providence is worshipped and waited upon by His spiritual people; yet is He not now revealed as He yet shall be, the real and visible King whom all things actually obey. His entry to the possession of the inheritance of the heathen and the uttermost parts of the earth, is what we look for at His second coming, when Satan shall be expelled, and righteousness shall cover the earth; but till then, Satan will continue possessed of all which Adam lost at the Fall,—until the Second Adam shall come, the Lord from heaven, to rule and govern all things; the quickening Spirit, to quicken all things with life, which now are under the curse of death.

Now, dearly beloved brethren, if the word of the Lord be true, that a man cannot serve two masters; and that other word of the apostle be true, that "Christ hath no fellowship with Belial," it is a thing certain and indubitable, that he who

devotes himself to the one of these two kingdoms, must deny himself to the other; and that he who would attain unto both, must in the end be grievously disappointed; for Satan makes it a condition of his kingdom, that whosoever would be possessed of it must bow down and worship him: and Jesus, who came to destroy the works of Satan, hath as peremptorily said, "he who would be my disciple must forsake all, and take up his cross and follow Me." So that it is most manifest there can be no harmony nor communion between these two kingdoms of sight and of faith: wherefore it is written, "We walk by faith, and not by sight." And again; "Looking not at the things which are seen and temporal, but at the things which are unseen and eternal."

Now, let us transfer this reasoning from the outward world to the world within us—from the object to the subject; and we shall find it apply all the same: nay, the reasoning is true of the outward world only because it is true of the world within us; for had not Satan first obtained the mastery over man, he never would have obtained the mastery over the visible creation, which became subject to vanity, not of its own accord, not willingly, but by reason of its subjection unto man, and will follow the redemption of man as it followed our Fall; as it is written, "The earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." The kingdom within us, therefore, is Satan's, no less than the kingdom without us; the nature of men is evil, as well as the nature of the other creatures; and whosoever devoteth himself unto his own inclination and will, doth serve Satan as effectually, yea, and more effectually, than if he devoted himself to the thraldom of the world, or of riches, or of any low, base, and brutal passion; for Satan's throne is the natural will of man: wherefore it is said in the Scriptures, "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, false witness," with all that defileth and degradeth a man. Yet as the creation is subjected in hope, so also is man, the lord of creation: though he is in bondage, he is not annihilated; he hath a will, though that will be enslaved. Now, it hath pleased the Lord our Creator to become also our Redeemer, and to make known unto us deliverance and final redemption, so that

we also are saved by hope: for we are not yet put into the full possession of the promised inheritance, neither can be until the coming of the Lord; but we have the earnest of the Spirit, whereby we are taught to feel our bondage, and to hate it, and to desire its removal, and to contend against it, and to maintain the strife and warfare during all the days of our earthly pilgrimage. And this is our regeneration, the kingdom of the Spirit within us, and the indwelling of the Father and of the Son; which is not merely shadowed forth, but substantiated in the immaculate child of God, conceived in the womb of sinful flesh, whose life is our life of humiliation, suffering, and crucifixion; whereof the Lord gave us the ensample. The experience of this new creature is the saving knowledge of Christ: the life and energy of this new creature is the power of His resurrection: the endurance of this new creature is the fellowship of His sufferings: which I believe to be all done by the very same operation of the Holy Spirit which created the body of Christ, and maintained His human nature in all its trials and afflictions free from the taint and pollution of sin. So that if there be two kingdoms without us, there are also two kingdoms within us corresponding thereto, which are contrary and opposite the one to the other, according as it is written, "The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh." And again: "There is a law in my members warring against the law of my spirit, and leading me into captivity to the law of sin and death." And again: "The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."

Now, the kingdom of Satan within us hath fellowship with the kingdom of Satan without us; and in their fellowship and communion with one another is revealed the character of him who is the lord of both. Yield to the inclinations of nature, give way to the solicitations of the world, and you will become a child of the devil, and an expression of his image; sensual in the last degree, avaricious in the last degree; envious and malicious, and full of all unrighteousness. Nay, and in the end such wilful, arrogant, and rapacious creatures, do very often in themselves, or in their children, lose the very faculty of reason itself, and become

inmates of the asylum, or madmen at large. For what is reason but the light of the Divine word within the soul? that light which every man hath received of Christ's fulness, and which is brought into captivity, but knoweth and feeleth its captivity, and resisteth it while it can by the inventions of law and morality, and every other restraint upon the diabolical tendencies of our nature. Which faculty of reason or conscience Satan seeketh by various means to lull asleep, to drug with sensual enjoyments, to stifle with various passions; and, if he succeed, in bearing down by much wilfulness all those natural barriers which reason hath raised up in her own defence, it generally endeth by his attacking reason in her seat, and utterly overthrowing her, and obtaining the whole mastery of the man unto himself: and then, according to the capacity of his subject, he will either put a sword into his hand, and make a murderer of him; or put a pen into his hand, and make a deceiver of him; or put words into his mouth, and make a blasphemer of him; which are the three chief forms of diabolical possession to be met with, and one or other of the characteristics of every lunatic or madman whom you will find in confinement or at large. They are either destroyers with weapons of destruction, or deceivers with instruments of deception, or blasphemers with words of blasphemy; and in general they are all three combined in one. These great truths concerning Satan's kingdom, are not truths of revelation merely, but of reason: you may discern them in the laws with which men have seen it necessary to fence in their own wilfulness, and the restraints which they have agreed to submit to of every kind, in order to be defended against themselves. For law is not directed against others, but against ourselves: and this is the true dignity of man above the creatures, that he hath that in him which teacheth him to be afraid of himself, and to guard against himself. And law is but as it were the outwork of Reason's camp, which is all fortified against the enemy, by decencies and courtesies, and moral duties, present in every office, and preserving every relation of human life. And this is the fable of Prometheus upon the rock bound and preyed upon by every ravenous beast, and tempted by every divinity of

nature or messenger of Satan, but preferring his subjection to the authority of the reigning powers of creation; because he had the secret consciousness within him, that while he maintained the miserable contest there was a hope; yea, that it was more noble in that misery to be, than to reign with Satan and his ministers, or Jove and his deities, in their temporal and visible kingdom.

Now, Satan is using the goods of the present life, its wealth, its beauty, and its power, all its food and convenience and luxury, all its pleasures and ambitions and entertainments, in order to overcome this spirit of resistance, to stifle the soul, which still liveth, though in bondage; to drown its voice by awakening the voices of a thousand artificial wants to which he can minister; to allay its noble discontent by a thousand soft appliances; to divert its desires into a thousand directions, away from itself; to fill it with every care but the care of itself; to flatter it, to fawn upon it, yea, with the whole world to bribe it to bow down and worship him. And he succeedeth in the far greater number of cases; for so many seek to his temple of destruction, that he is fain to make the way of it broad and the gate wide, that there may be room for them all to enter. Of all examples of this degradation, I think the example of our countrymen in this city is the strongest, who come up, for the most part, well instructed in his wiles, and with all advantages of early knowledge and discipline upon their side; the conscience strong and enlightened, the body under a continual restraint, temperance in all things the very habit of their being, sound in the faith, and practised in the outward observance and obedience of the faith; and yet, my brethren, behold the issue, how they fall before the tempter, into earthworms, greedy of gain,—or into sons of Belial, greedy of distinction,—or into men of ambition, greedy of power,—or into members of Antichrist, having dissolved all connexion with Jesus, and warring against him by every means in their power; insomuch that, as Paul said of the Corinthians, we may also say of our countrymen in this city, "Not many wise, not many rich, not many noble, not many mighty, are called." And this, though painful, I mention as being the best evidence of the degrading effects of the cares

of this world;—the most unexceptionable case that I know of, because we are put upon our guard, and accustomed to the observation of conscience and the study of the word of God from our youth; whereas, the youth of this nation, and other nations, are not generally so favourably conditioned. And yet, ah me! what a difference between the tenderness of the soil in youth, and its hardness in old age! In every case, what the drudgery of this world brings us to; what blushes of ingenuous shame it wipes away; what rebukes of the tender conscience it overcomes; what shudderings of the very thought; what revoltings of nature it does away withal! So that methinks I might best appeal the matter to the bosom of each one before me; or to the words of our Lord, who said, "Ye must become as little children, in order that you may inherit the kingdom of heaven." But I the rather choose to revert to my former illustration, for the sake of so many of my young countrymen who hear me; and to entreat you to take warning by the multitudes, the thousands, and the tens of thousands of our countrymen, who, in gaining the world, have lost their own souls; that ye may not do likewise, but, on the other hand, may rebuke that spirit of gain and worldly advancement which they are wont to preach up to our youth, as they come hither, with, alas! too much of that spirit already in their breasts. For I reckon that we who are united by the ties of country, as well as of Christ, have a certain guardianship over our countrymen, and ought to watch for their souls, against Satan and his prosperous servants; and above all, my brethren, watch for yourselves, and ye shall be able also to watch for the sake of others.

2. Still further to open and expose the mystery of iniquity, which lies hid in the cares and riches and pleasures of this world, we observe, that when Satan hath enslaved the soul with worldly cares, as we have taught in the former part of this head, and thoroughly engaged it with the concerns of the present life, he maketh to it, out of his worldly kingdom, a complete system of delusion to all its powers and faculties, so that if it were possible it might never come to know or feel the want of the things of the world to come. First, for the body, he constructs, either in the reality or the prospect, as it

were, an artificial paradise, according to the taste, vulgar or refined, of the creature whom he would deceive. The multitudes of his votaries he treateth as little better than beasts of burden: finding them easy to deal with, he taketh them with food and raiment, and occasional cordials to the flesh. Others he flattereth with the hope of a comfortable and substantial home, wherein they may rear their children in decent order, and pass their age in cheerfulness. To others he holdeth out the more tempting bait of being clothed in purple, and faring sumptuously every day; and so on through every variety doth he deceive mankind with the prospect and even assurance of a bodily paradise, according to every one's taste. And by this single attachment of the body to its worldly helps and conveniences, he wholly disqualifies it from listening to the words of faith, and of hope, which Christ preacheth unto that same body when He says, "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body." And he doth so lay it into deep sleep, that none of the various diseases with which it is afflicted, nor of the deaths with which it is surrounded, nor its own growing infirmities, can awaken it from the elysium dream, or rather from the opiate stupor, which he hath brought over all its noble powers and faculties. For, let me tell you, the body of man is a noble creature of God, made to rule and command the whole of this visible world, with the very refuse of which Satan doth succeed in beguiling it. These senses were made to possess all material things, and to be possessed by none: the creatures were but the furniture for the entertainment of man's body, and the whole earth was but as the house for it to dwell in; and as the master of the house is more noble than the house, so is the body of man more noble than this earthly tabernacle which it was destined to inherit, and which we preach unto you that it shall inherit in the resurrection of the just, when the body of man shall arise, like the body of the Lord, leading captivity captive, and shall be like the angels of God in its inheritance of the kingdom of heaven.

I would not be fanciful in matters of Divine revelation; but

if the body of Christ, like unto which we are to be fashioned, arose from the earth at its pleasure and moved in the buoyant air, at its pleasure retired out of the realms of vision, and at its pleasure walked upon the watery deep, and commanded the winds that they should be still, and the trees that they should not yield their fruit, and the lion and the young lion and the adder that they should not be hurtful,—and this too His natural body, with which He appeared to His disciples while in the flesh—not that glorious body with which He appeared to them in the mount of transfiguration, in company with Moses and Elias,—who shall accuse me of being fanciful, when, being assured that my body shall be fashioned like to His glorious body, and shall see Him as He is, I believe for myself, and for all who are united to Him by saving faith, that we shall in like manner possess and rule the earth; know all the mysteries, chemical and mechanical, of matter; know all the mysteries of life, vegetable and animal; and have power over every creature, to order and command it, even as Adam had at first, in whom all science was instinct, all knowledge intuition, and all the achievements of art the free-will obedience of the subject creature? But, to all this doctrine of the Holy Scriptures, and discourse of the minister of the gospel, for the comfort and hope of the body of man in the resurrection of the just, for which we are desired to wait, as our "adoption, even the redemption of the body," the multitudes consumed and satisfied with the cares of the world are wholly unfitted by their contentment and delight with some miserable dole and allowance of that prison-fare with which they are presently enthralled.

It was the care of the body of her Divine guest which drew Martha's ear from the communion of His blessed word, in order that her hand might minister to the comfort of His person. She was not ignorant of the oracle of wisdom which was seated between His lips, nor even of the awful power that resided in His word; for it was she who said unto Him, "If thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." Neither was she unskilled in religious doctrine; for when the Lord said unto her, "Thy brother shall rise again," she answered, "I know he shall rise at the resurrection of the just;" but she

was carried away by the bustling spirit of care, until even the gentleness and patience of the Lord was overcome, and He reproved her. Nay, so engrossing is this spirit of care, that, instead of being rebuked by the example of her sister Mary, sitting at the feet of Jesus, she would have had the Lord to reprove her of idleness, forgetting altogether that there was a world of the spirit, after which Mary was hungering and thirsting, like the hart in a parched land. And then it was that our Lord taught her the inferiority of her spirit to her sister's; of her diligence to her sister's; the inferiority of her love to her sister's love, whereof the former treated Him but as a respected guest, the other as a teacher sent from God,—saying, "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things; but one thing is needful; and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her:" which shall not be taken away from her, as shall be the object of thy care; for these things comfortable to flesh and blood, with the care of which thou art cumbered, shall not enter with thee into the kingdom of heaven, which flesh and blood cannot inherit, but shall be debarred thence; whereas that "one thing needful," that better part, the regeneration of the spirit, and its nourishment by the word of God, which thy sister Mary hath chosen, shall not be taken from her, but shall find for her a passage into the joy of her Lord: when, for all that she hath lost, she shall receive an hundredfold; and besides this pearl of great price, for which she hath sacrificed all things, all these very things which she hath sacrificed shall be added in a new and incorruptible form.

And now, brethren, be ye witnesses whether the Lord's rebuke to Martha be not much needed by many of you, who, though ye possess, not in your houses the bodily presence of your Lord, do yet possess His holy and blessed word, containing the only food of the soul, its only consolation, and its only medicine; yet how are ye, by reason of multitudinous cares, hindered all the live-long day from listening to its divine discourse. There it lies a silent witness against you; and if it could speak, it would open its mouth and say unto you, "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things; but one is needful." And when

ye do unfold its sacred pages to read it, or when you listen to hear it read, how do these worldly cares call off and occupy the whole intelligence of the spirit, so that it is dead to what it reads, or deaf to what it hears, but all alive and active within its secret chambers about some object of worldly concern! And thus it is that Satan, having drudged us all the day long in his house of care, and borne our spirits hither and thither at his sovereign command, doth, when cometh the evening hour of prayer, stand mocking by, while his faithful servant ineffectually striveth to shake himself loose from those hopes and fears and interests, to which he hath given himself willingly all the day long; and when the Sabbath arrives it brings no rest, and the house of God brings no composure, and praise is no incense of the understanding or heart, and prayer is no worship, and the word of God is no oracle of truth. Ah! and our discourse with one another is lame, unless helped forward by the care of this world: and what shall I say more, but revert to the words of the Lord, that we are like ground overrun with thorns and weeds, whereupon the seed of the sower is altogether lost, or, if it do spring up, is choked and bringeth no fruit to perfection.

I began this head of discourse by treating of bodily cares; but this basis is not broad enough to represent that state of thraldom to which Satan would reduce us, and from which our Lord would redeem us. To have said this much, however, concerning that portion of our care, may have been important to women, upon whom the cares which concern the body are devolved by the general consent of civilised society, and to the attentive discharge of which they are called by the apostle, when he says, "I will therefore, that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house," &c. And let me further say unto them, before I leave this part of my subject, whether they be mothers, or daughters, or servants, that they are of Martha's character, and not of Mary's, and worthy of Martha's rebuke, if oft times during the day their soul desireth not the recreation and refreshment of holy thought, divine discourse, spiritual instruction, and other pious employments; which, if they

desire, permit them to have, I charge you who have the authority over them, in the name of that God whose creatures, whose servants, whose ransomed they are, before they were joined to you in the relationships of this mortal life; and I give you this charge as ye shall answer unto God for that authority with which He hath invested you.

These cares of the body, and of the house, we masters of the creation devolve upon our sisters, that we may be disengaged for other, and, as we judge, higher cares; higher indeed, in the kingdom of Satan, but surely not nearer unto God. These are the cares of this world's business, and government, and well-being. By business, I mean not its traffic merely, but the production of its goods, the inventions by which they are conveyed from place to place, the arts by which they are beautified and accommodated to use, with all the natural sciences, which are, as it were, but the handmaidens of art and traffic. By government, I mean not magistracy and statesmanship alone, but all the travail of lawgivers, and teachers of the youth, and defenders of the state, by sea and land; philanthropists and moralists, and all who intend and watch over the interests of the community. By the well-being of the world, again, I understand a higher interest still, than that of men's bodily appointments, which business regardeth; or his social appointments, which government regardeth; even the interest of his intellectual and moral being, upon which philosophy and poetry and knowledge were wont to wait. From these three sources, of business, government, and well-being, Satan doth constitute a heaven for the soul with that same skill of delusion with which, from the material world, he constitutes a paradise for their body. The largest and most numerous class of men he satisfieth with the first; saying unto them—"What greater holiness can there be than to deal honestly between man and man? What greater goodness can there be than to be kind unto the poor? What higher knowledge can there be than the knowledge of nature and the world? And what god but this vast and wondrous world, whose order and harmony, and various powers, we are engaged in discovering? And for the future world, we shall know more of it when we see it; and surely God can

never be so unmerciful as to make His creatures to be miserable." And so have you in few words, the faith, the heaven, and the god, of the great multitude of men who are engaged in the production, the manufacture, and the exchange of this world's goods.—For the second class of careful men, who travail in this world's government, and have their enjoyment in its social intercourse, their care being of a moral kind, Satan constructeth to them a faith, a heaven, and a god, according to their taste, which is somewhat as follows:—"All punishment is for the reformation of the criminal; therefore there can be no eternal punishment: all law is for the obedience of the creature; therefore there can be no perfect law but a law suited to our ability. And so the gospel of Christ is all mercy, and God is a God of bounty, and will not be displeased with us, who are the peace-makers and peace-preservers of human society, the physicians of its diseases and the defenders of its health."—And for the third and highest class, who contemplate the intellectual and moral dignity of man in a wider sense than the sciences of nature and government will contain, they generally become gods unto themselves; and in their own exalted ideas they behold the heaven of which they are in pursuit. But of this class, as I have met with none, or hardly any, in the course of my pilgrimage, and have heard of very few extant in those times, I have no occasion to speak particularly. Suffice it to have shewn you in what way Satan steals the faith, the hope, and the desire of men, who are occupied with the cares of the world, away from the gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

And thus having foreclosed their souls by a fictitious and false gospel, he hath them wholly removed from the joyful sound of salvation by the gospel of Christ; and their spirit within them being deprived of its proper food, yea, rather being under a continual ministry of poisonous error, dies gradually, and leaves the whole man, body and soul, to be ruled by Satan at his pleasure. The cravings of the spirit after immortality and righteousness and peace, being thus satisfied with the mimicry of truth, and laid asleep in the lap of error, he hath the whole field unto himself, and entereth his slave to

the whole round of worldly cares; and there is no further hope of his redemption, unless it shall please the Lord, by some stroke of His providence, to shake those things upon which his faith and hope repose. The very calls and occasions for religion are eaten out; and the deluded people go on as well without it as with it, until death comes and reveals at once the terrible fallacy of a present life, and the loss of a life to come, with an inheritance of shame and wretchedness for ever. Speak to them of the world to come, they shrug their shoulders and say, "That will come time enough; the present world is burden sufficient." Press them a little more, and they will add with a smile, "Why do you sicken our enjoyment with such gloomy questions?" And entreat them, for their soul's sake, to take thought ere it be too late; and they will confess that this is a concern to which they have given too little thought. And open the matter to them at large, and reason it with them, and they will say, "Thou almost persuadest me to be a Christian: I will hear thee again at some more convenient season."

I do pity from the bottom of my soul the careful, busy world, and would fain do my little part to instruct and warn them; or, if I cannot save them from certain destruction, to instruct and warn all against the strong current and whirling eddies of the gulf in which, alas! the multitude are sweeping downwards to destruction. What think you, my dear friends? is there not a voice within you that says, "I was not made to be the world's drudge, but to be the world's monarch? Else why this capacious understanding of all secrets of nature; this cunning hand that worketh it into infinite forms; this eye, which, being armed with ingenious instruments, at once possesseth the amplest and the most minute of things? And why this heart, which is blank in the midst of riches and possessions and honours and power? Surely this soul of mine is not made to be the companion, much less the bondsman, of those creatures; for it is uncomforted in the midst of them. They cannot quiet the remorse of crime; they cannot heal the wounds of affection; they cannot extract the power of ingratitude, or fill up the tedium of disappointment. They bring me no peace; they do but

increase my cares: one mountain climbed, another ariseth before me, and another, and there is no end of the labour. I do but get deeper into the bowels of this charmed land, and lose more and more my own liberty, my own innocency, my own being. I am hurried and hastened along with a multitude, who hurry and haste they know not whither. I could wish again for the ignorance and inexperience of my youth; for certainly I grow daily more hardened, and more cold, and more shrewd, and more artful. I am made familiar with deception, and trained to endure it, to conform to it. And what do I reap as the fruit of these earnest and laborious sowings? I reap a great increase of care, a heap of worldly ambitions, an intoxication of worldly pleasure. But where is conscience gone? Where are those ingenuous thoughts with which my life commenced, the blushings of shame, the ardours of enthusiasm, the artless simplicity, the free and delicate honour, the tender and romantic affections, the chivalrous purposes, the gay and glorious morning of my life? Where is the poetry and the romance, and the beauty, with which my early soul did invest all things. Ah! and have I reaped the loss of all these fascinations? have I resigned this attendant angel, whom I wooed in youth, for the worldly beldam who now sits heavy upon my aged breast, and drinks the life-blood of my heart?"—There is hardly a wider difference between an angel and a demon, than there often is between a young man entering the world in all the rich exuberance of youthful spirit, fulness of a joyful heart, and pastime of a simple and innocent imagination; and the same being after he hath been well drudged in mammon's workshop; worn and wearied out with the chances of life's lottery, if not fretted and maddened at the great gaming table of ambition. Which difference all know better than I can describe it; for mine has been as the inland lake, compared with that boisterous sea on which many have had to steer their course. And yet I am not ignorant (as who can, who hath fairly grasped and wrestled with the world?) of the fearful havoc it maketh upon the fair person of a man. Which may well be likened to a brave and martial troop of soldiers riding into the field of battle, in all the freshness of morning strength, with

military glee and brave banners, burnished steel and warlike minstrelsy; and the same troop returning, tattered and torn, wounded and slain, weary and sorrowful, covered with their own blood and the dust of the ground: and as such a troop, which hath been defeated and disgraced, routed and put to flight, so is every company of men whom you may fix upon, after having contended in this world's contest, to what they were when they entered into that conflict, more direful to the spirits of men than ever was any battle by sea or land to their bodies. But into this theme, which may be thought to breathe the sentimental rather than the theological, I must not enter further, but return again to the exact matter of the text.

If women, being cumbered with household and family cares, be hindered from consulting the oracles of the Lord, and impeded in listening to His ministers, and much marred and interrupted in their worship, how much more, ye busy and careful men, upon whose shoulders all these cares of the world's traffic, government, and well-being rest? It is not the positive consumption of time; it is not the positive consumption of strength, and the absorption of mind; but it is the effect of all these combined upon the spirit. Every act of worldly carefulness is an act of homage to Satan; as every act of faith and hope in God's good providence is an act of homage unto Christ. The former disqualifies for the latter; because we cannot serve two masters, or be the subjects of two kingdoms which are enemies, and at open war with each other. This is the seat and centre of the evil. As every kingdom hath its laws and principles, and governments, and history, and interests, and hopes, which form the subject of discourse and debate unto its people, so have these two kingdoms of Satan and of Christ their separate and opposite objects of interest and discourse, wherein their subjects take pleasure. The former, that is, Satan's subjects, delighting above all things to discourse of traffic, and gain, and vanity, and fashion, of ambition and power, of routs and revels, of riots and confusions, which are not embodied in any one book, because his kingdom is ever changing, but which are thrown off daily and weekly, and monthly and yearly, and served up by thousands, and tens of thousands, for the information and

entertainment of his numerous and faithful subjects. The latter, that is, the subjects of Christ's kingdom, take pleasure in His everlasting and unchangeable word, and in the faithful exposition and ministry of the same: they love to be informed of this law and of that precept of the kingdom; they delight to be instructed in this doctrine and that mystery of its government. Above measure they delight in the varied acts and achievements of its King: they love every one who breathes His Holy Spirit; they communicate and hold fellowship with each other in the same spirit of truth and of love; they delight to hear of the successes of the kingdom,—and for information thereof they look into the archives of the state, which alike comprehend all the past, all the present, and all the future; and their soul is borne aloft upon the wings of faith and hope, and ever and anon they go forth in the spirit of the dove, and hover above the assuaging waters of Satan's realm, to see if any summit of the new world, the kingdom to come, be appearing in view, and whether they can bring back in their mouth any word of encouragement, any olive branch of returning verdure unto their brethren in the ark of the Church, which hath been so long floating over the waters of wrath, to save all who would enter therein, from the deluge wherewith the spiritual world hath been covered since the Fall. And thus it is, that while the cares of the world, or Satan's kingdom, indispose men to the reading and hearing of the word, the cares of the world to come, or of Christ's kingdom, do dispose or incline them thereto, as to their necessary food and greatest joy; while every heart that is subject unto the world doth receive the seed into thorns to be choked, the children of the kingdom do receive it into good soil to be fructified: the former hating and despising it, and not able, however willing, to profit by it, because they cannot serve two masters; the latter looking upon it as their light and their saving health. They look upon it with a single eye, and their whole body is full of light. And they feel what the Psalmist expresseth in the nineteenth Psalm, that the sun in the firmament is but an emblem of the law of God; that the light he sendeth abroad, and the heat he diffuseth, from which nothing remaineth hid, is but an emblem of the law of

the Lord, which converteth the soul from barrenness to fruitfulness, which enlighteneth the dark regions of the spirit, which searcheth into our secret faults, and revealeth our presumptuous sins, and worketh everywhere gladness and peace unto ourselves, charity and love and earnest intercession towards our brethren, honour to the Lord Jesus Christ, and glory to God and the Father, through the effectual operation of the Holy Spirit; and to these three Divine persons, in one God, be honour and glory, for ever and ever.

III.—THE CURE.

These remarks bring me to the third part of our lecture, in which we proposed to open the only radical cure of this evil propensity of our fallen nature; from the mention of which we have not refrained ourselves as we went along, but now address ourselves to speak of it expressly. Our Lord, when handling this matter in His Sermon on the Mount, doth not remove the care of men from the things of the present world, without fixing them at the same time upon the things of the world to come; beginning His exhortation with the assertion of the contrariety and contradiction of the two kingdoms, present and to come, and concluding with this improvement of the whole, "Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven, and its righteousness; and all these things of the visible kingdom shall be added thereto." To the imprisoned and benighted reason, which Satan, with so much pains and with so much success, endeavours to restrain and resist, and, when he can, utterly to overthrow by working against it the evils of the present world, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is Reason itself, the Sun of Righteousness and of Truth, from which we derive our light, and who lighteth every man that cometh into the world, directeth His ministry of redemption and deliverance, calling to it, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light;" that is, the light of living faith, which substantiates a world to come, and realiseth a hope that is unseen. He cometh unto His own, mighty to save, in order to restore them to the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness, and to restore the kingdom of God and its righteousness unto them. He cometh to destroy the works of the devil,

and utterly to bereave him of his power, and deprive him of a local habitation and a name upon this earth in the age to come, with whose pure hopes and blessed cares He desireth His disciples to converse. He cometh to open the eyes of the blind, and the prison-doors of them that are bound. And every one who loveth the light of reason, and seeketh after righteousness, cometh unto Him, that he may be enlightened: and only those whose deeds are evil withdraw from Him, and hate the light, whereby they become witnesses against themselves; for they have refused the only light of truth, and preferred the darkness of error: they have refused the kingdom of peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, and preferred the kingdom of Satan, which is in all wickedness and delusion. And He is also the life, to revive and renew and redeem man from that death which Satan is seeking to perfect within them; I say, seeking to perfect, because he hath not yet perfected death, for where death is there is no hope, and there is no resistance. A spirit is dead when it believes and trembles; but we are commanded to believe and be saved. A spirit is dead when Satan hath it without a wile and without a struggle, when there is no resistance of the will, and no dispensation of Divine grace and help held out to it. In short, a spirit is dead when there is no sign or symptom of life; that is, no consciousness nor love of truth, no desire after peace and blessedness, no sense of love and affection; but dark broodings of discontent, gloomy forebodings of evil, restless appetites of mischief, scorn and contempt of grace and forgiveness, and those other satanic features of man, with which that noble poet, now no more, hath made this generation too familiar. To which condition of utter death Satan laboureth to bring every child that is born of a woman, by means of this world's kingdom, which is his armoury of offensive weapons, his treasury of bribes, his gaming-house, where souls are staked for chances of worldly goods; and, in short, his theatre for displaying himself in every form and character which may best suit the taste and disposition of the various beholders. But, though the death is gradual, and not consummated until we are removed hence; nor, as I may say, until the general judgment; yet it is sure, and can in no other way

be shunned but by the redemption of Christ and the work of the Spirit. So that it is called very death, "dead in trespasses and sins;" very wrath, "the children of wrath, even as others:" even as the present condition of believers is called very salvation, and very life, and very blessedness, though it be but the transition out of death into life, and a condition not of infallible certainty, but of trial, and danger, and continual warfare; yet tending to certainty and the assurance of perseverance unto the end. So that we are placed in the kingdom of death, or the kingdom of life; the kingdom of darkness, or the kingdom of light; under the lordship and mastery of Satan, or under the lordship and mastery of Christ.

Now observe, that, according as the light and life which is in Christ Jesus—that is, the faith of His word and the operation of His Spirit—make progress in any soul, it is delivered out of Satan's deceitful kingdom, into the spiritual kingdom of faith and trust; for, as was said above, the outward world followeth in its redemption the redemption of the inward world, which casteth its own colours and forms over the things which it is surrounded and served withal. The soul becomes faithful in the promises of God, assured of His love and favour, trustful in His providence, and conscious of another world to come, to the inheritance of which she is called, and of which she is permitted to entertain the hope and assurance through her union with the Lord Jesus Christ,—to which union she perceiveth that all her unworthiness and sinfulness are no obstacle whatever, but rather the very occasion of the Lord's pity, and the motive of His mighty sacrifice. There is, therefore, on the one hand, the belief of God's superintendency over the world, and His not suffering His people to want unless it should be to His own glory; the feeling that we are His own creatures, in whom He will manifest forth His power before men, and that we have nothing to do but to trust Him, and resign ourselves up to His wise and gracious purposes, in nothing desiring our own will, but His will to be fulfilled, even as the Lord shewed us the example, who continually said, in things great and in things small, in things most to be desired and in things most to be suffered, "Thy will, not mine be

done." And along with this, on the other hand, there groweth in the soul, the sense of a higher calling, and according as the spirit of faith and holiness is revealed, her knowledge of her destiny is revealed; a new feeling of her enlarged capacity, enlarged even to the entertainment of God himself, who dwelleth with him that is of a humble and contrite spirit; new desires and new cares; the care of the kingdom of heaven, and the desire of its righteousness. And as light expelleth darkness, truth error, and a nobler spirit every ignobler spirit; as the service of a good master makes the service of a wicked master to be despised; so doth the kingdom of Christ cast out the kingdom of Satan, and the belief and hope and desire of a world to come, holy and righteous, doth cast out all trust and desire of the world that is full of all deception and malice and iniquity. The heart being always where the treasure is, and our treasure being now in the world of faith and hope, not of vision, our heart is there also. Yet are we not the less anxious after treasure; but it is a treasure in heaven, where neither moth nor rust corrupteth, and where thieves break not through to steal. We are covetous; but it is the best gifts of the Spirit which we covet, at the apostle's bidding. We have a citizenship, but it is not in an earthly kingdom; and a station, but not in Cæsar's house: our citizenship is in heaven, and our place is in the house of Christ, which is yet to be revealed, and whereof we have the spiritual presentiment, and, as it were, earnest in His Church. And we are careful for our children likewise, but it is that they may be established with grace, not with meats; and adorned with the ornaments of a meek and quiet spirit, not with plaiting of the hair and costly apparel, that they may be beautiful in the sight of Christ their husband, and objects of His true affection,—not that they may become objects of attraction, and occasions of deception unto men. But this new region of Care, denominated in the Sermon on the Mount, "the kingdom of heaven and its righteousness," hath in it no uncertainty: being founded upon the stable promises of God, and sued out by placid and assured prayers, desired and received also in obedience to His will and pleasure, and in the spirit of subjection and of contentment, it doth beget no disappointments, but, on the other hand, assurances,

in proportion to the earnestness and magnitude of our investments of faith. And why? because God is true, because God is faithful, because God loveth His people, and maketh them a sign and a wonder in the sight of all their enemies round about. But that other kingdom of Satan being under a deceiver, one who loves deception, and is a liar from the beginning, whosoever travels and traffics therein is sure to be defeated, disappointed, vexed and grieved, his brain racked with demons, his heart burdened with anxieties, his whole life a drudgery, his whole soul a waste: he is born into trouble as the sparks fly upward; and as those rising sparks do signify a conflagration and flaming fire from which they come, so do these thick coming troubles and molestations bespeak a fountain of woe and misery, a spirit of fire which these creatures of Satan infold within their breast, and a spirit of pure malignity by which their souls are administered.

In like manner, the apostle of the Gentiles, when he requires of the disciples to "be careful for nothing," doth at the same time, like his Master, teach them how that deliverance was to be accomplished, saying, "but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God;" assuring them that the result would be perfect peace and composure of soul. "The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." Which coincidence of spirit between the apostle and his Lord, confirmeth the more that truth which we have so constantly taught you, that the kingdom of Satan is not otherwise to be cast out than by the coming of the kingdom of Christ; that the "strong man" who hath obtained possession of the house, can be cast out only by a stronger than he; that it is vain for us to think, by any act of our will, working in its own strength, to deliver ourselves from carefulness, or any other of the fruits of the evil one; that to change the occupation bringeth no rest, and to shift the scene cureth no sorrow; and that the heart must be cleansed of its perilous load, and filled with the living waters of the Spirit, before any of the streams which issue from it can be pure, peaceful, and refreshing. Wherefore we advise no man, as it were by a leap to pass over from Satan's kingdom of careful-

ness, into Christ's kingdom of faith, which is not possible; but he ought to pray for the Spirit of Christ, to cast out of him the spirit of the world, and according as he receiveth the answer of his prayer he shall be redeemed from the powers of the world, and possessed with the powers of the world to come, and his deliverance shall grow apace as his bondage grew apace, according to that great maxim of the Christian life, that the redemption proceedeth from the inward to the outward, not from the outward to the inward; being first wrought in the spirit, then in the word, then in the sense, and then in the active life. Whereto agree the words of the Lord, which may be called the inscription upon the porch of the Christian temple: "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven:" for the salvation of every soul, and every step in the progress of that salvation, waiteth for and expecteth the coming of the Spirit, without which the law is unattainable, and the gospel of none effect; which Spirit, proceeding from the Father and the Son, worketh in us that life which feedeth upon the word of the latter, the bread sent down from heaven, which delighteth in the law of the former, and bringeth forth plentiful fruits of faith and hope, and charity and holiness, and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, to the praise and the glory of our Father which is in heaven.

Having given you this word of caution, touching the way and progression of that deliverance; lest any of you hastening, in your own strength, or by my persuasion, or the persuasion of others, might, without due advice, counsel, and strength of the Spirit of God, resign any portion of your present industry and carefulness, to the injury of your character and estate, without gaining any promotion in the spiritual life and way of godliness; I do now proceed to devote myself to the arduous task of setting before you the only cure of that evil of worldly care, whereof we have set forth both the description and the effect, earnestly praying the Lord, for your sakes and my own, and above all for the glory of Christ in us His members, and for the spiritual redemption of those talents and creatures of God with which we are intrusted, that He would bestow upon me

the clear light of manifestation, and upon you the single eye of discernment, that His blessed word might prove in the midst of us, glorious as the rising and shining of the sun in the firmament, and cherishing to our souls, as the heat of the sun in harvest, after the earth hath been refreshed with the latter rain.

That this looking unto the kingdom to come in this world, is the true and only cure in all the storehouse of faith, for that evil of sight which ariseth from looking to the kingdom which now is, I do most firmly believe, with a faith which is grounded upon the doctrine of the Lord and His apostles set forth above, and upon the Holy Scriptures in general. Now, perceiving that this kingdom to come is turned into thin vapour by our spiritualising divines, who resist the letter of the prophetic word, and being convinced that, until faith can substantiate it again as the first Christians did, we shall never have anything like primitive self-denial to this present evil world; and being, moreover, well assured that all other remedies they can propose, are mere palliatives, and not radical cures, I have resolved, after mature deliberation and prayer, to strike at the root, and try whether I cannot bring the great Scripture arguments to the hearts of a Scripture-believing people.

But first, I will add to the example of our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, and that of the apostles, quoted above, some other instances, taken from the Scriptures, to the same effect of shewing that they are in the constant habit of presenting this, and no other cure for the spirit of worldliness. And to this end, I take first that passage in chap. iv. of the Epistle to the Philippians, where the apostle sets himself directly against the extravagant desires and consuming cares of this present world, and against the distresses and disappointments which they bring, saying, "Rejoice in the Lord alway; again I say, Rejoice. Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God: and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds

through Christ Jesus." Whence I cannot but observe to you, that it is the expectation of "the Lord at hand" upon which the apostle grounds his exhortation, both to joy and to moderation;—for the "rejoicing in the Lord alway," I conceive to be equivalent to that which the same apostle declares in Rom. v. 2: "By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God,"—denoting the joy that springs from the future fellowship of His glory, sustaining the soul under the present fellowship of His sufferings. Even as He himself, "for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame;" so do we, for the joy and crown of rejoicing set before us, rejoice always in the present and pressing tribulations through which we must enter the kingdom. And for the moderation, or meekness, or gentleness, (for so the original word is rendered in other parts of Scripture, and properly means an equable temperament of spirit, which is not borne down by trials, but beareth up under them; neither is distressed with anxieties, but exerciseth faith and prayer against them;) this grace, or rather temperament of the renewed soul, is connected with the instant coming of the Lord, not only in this passage, but in various other passages of Scripture, of which I shall content myself with quoting two only. In James v. 7–9, it is written, "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts; for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned; behold the Judge standeth at the door." Here the coming of the Lord to judge the quick, His standing before the door, is used by the apostle three times, to destroy all hastiness of mind and disquietude of heart and grudging of temper against one another, and grief and anguish of soul from worldly accidents. The next passage to the same effect, is in Heb. x. 35: "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward; for ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise: for yet a little while and he that shall come will come, and will

not tarry." In this passage, "the recompence of reward," "the receiving of the promise at the coming of the Lord," are made the argument against falling away from our faith, through the manifold trials of this life; and not the ordinary trials of this life only; but even the most violent persecutions of the wicked, to which those Hebrews had submitted joyfully, in the anticipation of the inheritance that is ready to be revealed in the last times; for in the verse preceding those quoted, it is said, "For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and enduring substance." In like manner, to quote another passage, our Lord, in Luke xxi., where He gives the awful precursors and signs of His coming, after that fearful one of the terrible persecution of His Church by their own parents, brethren, kinsfolk, and friends, He saith, "In your patience possess ye your souls..... When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh."

From these passages, so very pertinent in spirit and even in letter,—and I might have quoted many more,—I do infer, that the Spirit of God which spake in our Lord and His apostles, and which should speak in all His ministers, doth intend that the coming of the Lord should be used as the great argument to deliver the soul from carefulness of every kind, and induce upon it the repose and peaceful rest of the children of God. As the chickens, when any storm ariseth, flee under the sheltering wings of the hen;—as the child, when its spirit is ruffled, will rest only in the bosom of its mother; so the soul, finding no covering wings, nor parent's bosom anywhere in all the visible creation, fleeth to hope, and by hope is saved, looking for and hastening unto the day of the coming of the Lord; being sore smitten with the heat of every careful and busy day, and likewise by the anxious reflections of every night; the sun smiting by day, and the moon by night, she looketh with expectation for that better sun, the Sun of Righteousness, who shall arise with healing in His wings unto them that fear the Lord.

And I further perceive from the study of the word of God, that as the coming of Christ, in prospect, is set forth as the

remedy of cares, so when the coming of Christ is described as present or at hand, I find that it is their much occupation with cares which hinders the Church from accepting the blessings which are attendant upon that great event. We know that the parable of the Marriage Supper, contained in Luke xiv. and Matt. xxii., refers to the coming of the Lord, from the question to which it was given as the reply, "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God;" and also from Rev. xix., where, immediately before the coming of the Lord, it is sung in heaven, "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him, for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready:" and it is proclaimed on earth, "Blessed are they who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb." Now, in this parable it is said, that those whom the king chose to honour with an invitation were hindered from accepting it by the occupation and engrossment of worldly cares;—the first saying to the servant, who at supper-time went forth to bid the guests, "I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it; I pray thee have me excused;" and another said, "I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them, and I pray thee have me excused;" and another said, "I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come;"—where, under three heads, are represented the three forms of care; first, the care of possessions; secondly, the care of traffic; and, thirdly, the care of affection or social relations. It is added in Matthew, that some, by their dislike to be disturbed, were stirred up to such a pitch of malice, that they took the servants and entreated them spitefully, and slew them; whereat the king being wroth, sent forth his armies and destroyed those murderers, and burnt up their city; and not one of those men which were bidden, saith he, shall taste of my supper. This proves, that the spirit of worldy carefulness, and the expectation of the Lord's coming, are antagonist principles, which mutually destroy one another; and that if the latter do not destroy the former, then the former must destroy the latter. If I, or any other servant of the King, succeed not by the healing in the wings of the Sun of Righteousness, about to arise, to kill the poison of worldly cares, which is rankling in the bosom of

every worldly man, and in your bosom, dearly beloved brethren, then when the day of the Lord's coming arriveth, that same poison of worldly care shall disqualify you for, and make you inadmissible to, all the benefits of His kingdom; which strengthens our conclusion, that the Spirit intended to destroy the principle and strength of Satan's kingdom, and to cast it out, by the hope of the kingdom that is to come.

And therefore, as an interpreter of God's word, and a minister of the Spirit poured upon the Church at the day of Pentecost, I am constrained by the constant custom of Holy Writ, to set forth to you, as the only efficient cure of worldly carefulness, the expectation of the kingdom that is about to be revealed. The present kingdom is not ours either to desire or to possess; the future kingdom is ours both to desire and to possess. Why, then, should we be careful of that which pertaineth to our enemy, and not careful of that which pertaineth to ourselves in promise? Why should we be Satan's stewards, denying the authority of God in all the creatures, and using them for other ends than for His glory? Why should we allow Satan to practise upon us the deception, that we obtain anything by and of ourselves; that we hold anything for ourselves, and that we ought to care for it as our own, and not as God's, whose we are, and from whom we have every good and perfect gift? Do ye not know that the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein? Know ye that the Lord he is God; He hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture. Know ye not that He hath redeemed the world from the curse, and that it is His by the purchase of His blood? That we hold of Him everything? That our children are His, whom we surrender to Him in baptism? Our flocks and our herds are His: yea, our very life is His;—"for in Him we live and move and have our being:" in fine, that "every good and perfect gift cometh down from the Father of lights, in whom there is no variableness nor shadow of turning."

If, therefore, we are but stewards of the bounties of another, and as yet possess nothing in our own right, then let us be careful of that which is intrusted to us, for the profit and

interest of Him who hath intrusted it; that, when He comes to require of every man an account of his stewardship, we may be able to give in our account with joy, and not with grief. By so doing, all our care will have a spiritual and heavenly cause, and a spiritual and heavenly reward; the things that are seen, instead of detaching us, will only attach us the more to our absent Lord; every new gift, every new possession, will be received as a mark of His trust, and will prove an occasion of thankfulness: the increase of trust will stimulate us to greater activity in His service; will fill us with larger knowledge of His purposes; will employ us in wider spheres of divine occupation, and so become, as it ought to be, first, a cause of spiritual thankfulness; secondly, of spiritual knowledge; thirdly, of prayer for spiritual direction; fourthly, of spiritual activity in the service of our God and King. And as the agent maketh continual remittances unto his principal, of the fruits and profits of his agency, so will we be sending up to heaven continually the rich offerings and fruits of our consigned estate; and while upon the earth using it, for the nourishment of His poor and needy children, and for the redemption of the enslaved of the family, for the universal promotion of righteousness and peace, and for the other good ends of the suffering kingdom of Christ. We will be continually laying out the earthly part to advantage, and occupying the present use of everything until the Lord shall come to reckon with His servants; to claim His own, and to redeem the purchased inheritance.

For though the kingdom and the power and the glory of visible and terrestrial things belong to Satan and his angels and his wicked servants, as in this discourse we have often taught, yet is there a suffering kingdom of Christ Jesus, and of true believers, upon the earth; whereof all of you are members who believe the gospel and are baptized, being translated of God from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of His dear Son, which suffering kingdom of Christ is both inward in the soul and outward in the world;—the former being the suffering in the flesh, by which we cease from sin; the latter being the victory over the world, which is our faith. Of this kingdom, as I said, ye are honoured to be members, being

counted worthy to suffer for His sake, that, after ye have been tried for a little season, ye may be received into everlasting glory: and ye are bound to forego the kingdom of this world, and to deny yourselves to its softest and tenderest affections, to withstand its most fearful and its most seducing trials, to take up your cross and follow Jesus through good and through bad report. The trader, by strict honesty and unaccommodating righteousness, is to suffer the loss from which a little artifice and deception might have preserved him; and he is to withhold himself from the gain which might have been reaped by a little dexterity, cunning, and falsehood. The citizen is to partake in Christ's suffering kingdom, by denying himself to ambition, and refusing to interest his heart and soul in the party and selfish questions which agitate the community and the state whereof he is a member; and when he is called upon to speak and to act, then by speaking and acting as having a Lord and Master in heaven, whom all earthly lords and masters should obey; whence it will come to pass, that he will be equally disregarded, disesteemed, and disliked by all the parties who fight and contend under their various banners for the kingdom that is seen and temporal. The man of property and of power, partaketh of Christ's suffering kingdom, by refusing to intermeddle in the vain and sensual luxuries which surround him, and denying himself to those courtesies, briberies, and evil suits and applications, by which he might rise to honour and dignity in his own province, or in the state; and not only in these acts of self-denial, but likewise in works of holiness and goodness and mercy, through the whole sphere of His power, in helping the saints, in ministering to their consolation, in encouraging the faithful ministers of the gospel, and doing the office of the good Samaritan unto all who stand in need of help. The servant also, and we are all servants in one sense or another, partaketh of his great Master's suffering kingdom, by denying himself to every personal and private interest of his own, and consulting his Master's interest in all things, remembering that he hath a Master in heaven. And so on, through all the relations and offices of life, in all the places and stations of society, there is to be discharged a duty and a function of the kingdom of our

Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. And in every act which it is possible for man to do, and in every thought which it is possible for him to utter, there is to be a recognition of Christ the King, and of the Church the kingdom, and of ourselves the subjects of the suffering King, the members of the militant Church; and to every word so expressed, and to every act so performed in homage to the Lord, there will be found an active opposition of Satan in the flesh, and in the world, from the first germination of it in the spirit, through all the progress of its growth, until it shed its fruit into the garner of the Lord, and be recorded as well done in the Lamb's book of life.

Now, if this be the true account of the suffering kingdom of Christ, whereof we are members, it must be manifest that it proceedeth not by much care of our own; that is, distress of mind, anxiety of heart, forecasting of fears and present troubles; but by much ministry of the Spirit, by much meditation of the word, by fervent prayer; by a continual sense, not of our own, but of our Lord's interest; and a continual disposition, not to our own, but to our Maker's glory. And therefore a life of such care is a life of communion with the Father, and with the Son, and with the Holy Ghost. It is further manifest that the self-denial and suffering which, as members of His suffering kingdom, we are called upon to endure, must carry our souls forward to the day of our redemption; for to suffer is not pleasant, or without pain to be endured; and if there be any prospect of its mitigation and removal, that time is looked forward to with a constant longing expectation. Neither is it natural to be always in a state of conflict with an enemy. Conflict, indeed, implies the purpose and desire of conquest and victory; and if we expect upon the arrival of a certain one to have the assured victory, with what earnest expectation will his arrival be expected! As in the great battle which suppressed the first struggle of the infidel power, our brave troops and their brave general waited, in the heat of conflict, with the utmost longing for the arrival of their confederates in arms; so ought the Church, with eager outlook, with stretching out of the neck, to be looking for the arrival of the Captain of her salvation and the

heavenly host; by the brightness of whose coming all her enemies are to be destroyed. And I perceive that if this consolation be not expected and continually borne in mind, one of two things must come to pass;—either we will give in to worldly accommodations, and lay down the spiritual weapons of our warfare, and so sink down into formal professors of Christ; or else we will be fretted and galled, and wearied out with much ineffectual and painful resistance, which will sicken the soul, and rob it of its tranquillity and peace;—and so, on the side of temper, Satan will take us captive, working in us the sharpness and keenness and violence of reformers, instead of the soft, meek, and patient assurance of apostles. And let me tell you, brethren, that in my opinion, the great heat and asperity which is charged, not without some cause, upon the age of Reformers, arose, as I conceive, chiefly from their not having present in their thoughts, this great hope and expectation, which alone can calm and compose the soul under all agitations and afflictions. For the care of this world is the beginning of impatience, and anxiety, and disquietude of soul; and the care of the world to come is the beginning of faith and trust, and peace and blessedness.

In order to trace out more exactly, and to understand more perfectly, how the expectation of the kingdom about to come in glory and majesty, and the administration of the present kingdom of suffering and distress, work together the cure of that carefulness and anxiety, impatience and tribulation, which the visible kingdom of Satan produceth in the souls of all men, we must recall to mind the nature of the disease and malady, and the precise causes of the pain and trouble which it occasions. Now, from the whole of what hath been said on the two former heads, it appears to me that the causes of the bitterness of worldly care are threefold, arising out of the past, the present, and the future. To wit,—first, Errors of knowledge and of feeling, causing erroneous estimates, unattainable desires, and unfounded expectations. This has its origin in the past, but reacheth its influence over the present and the future, and produceth that present inability to compass our desires and purposes, wherein I place the second cause, of anxiety and care. And the third consisteth in having linked our

happiness, not only to the unstable present, but to the dark uncertainties of the future. Of which three stings of serpent carefulness, we shall proceed to shew you how the poison is extracted, and, in its stead, balmy nourishment administered by the faith and care of the world to come.

First, then, it is to be observed, that the root and origin of all misery to the soul consisteth in a lie; as the source and origin of all blessedness to the soul consisteth in the truth. The mystery of iniquity had its beginning in a lie, when Satan said unto Eve, "Ye shall not surely die." Wherefore the Lord said of him, that "he is a liar from the beginning, and the father of a lie." And until now, every one who is led astray into the paths of present or future wickedness and misery, is seduced by the falsehoods with which Satan hath possessed his soul. And, if you ask me what particular lie it is which gives birth to the misery of worldly care;—I answer, it is a lie that I should feel myself in anything separate from God, and that I should know anything without knowing that God is in it, either as its Creator or its Redeemer. And it is a lie that I should see anything without seeing my Maker in it; and that I should hear anything without recognising in it my Maker's voice to me; or that I should will anything which my Maker willeth not; or that I should possess anything as if it were my own, and not the creature of His good providence, devoutly to be acknowledged, carefully to be improved for His glory, and faithfully to be accounted for in the day of His judgment. The visible world, with its boasted science, is all a lie, while it speaketh not of God, nor declareth unto men His handiwork; the being of man, with its metaphysical science, is all a lie, while it deriveth not its origin, acknowledgeth not its support, nor originateth its activity from God, neither discerneth in itself the light of Jesus Christ, "which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," nor feeleth the communion of the Holy Spirit and of the holy catholic Church, but is wrapt up in the mantle of its own self-sufficiency, isolated by the non-conducting atmosphere of its own pride, or covenanted with the sons of Belial, and the slaves of mammon, and the subjects of Satan's visible kingdom. And these are the fruitful parents of falsehood, of which all lies, disguises of

truth, dissimulations, and deceptions, are the children. This is the pall of darkness which the "Light that lighteth every one" came to remove from His goodly creation. This is the blindness of the eye, and the deafness of the ear, and the deadness of the heart, which the Spirit of the Lord God anointed Christ to remove, and by the removal of which He becomes "a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of His people Israel." While, therefore, you trust to the report which your natural man makes of the visible world, and yield to the propensities which arise in the train of the knowledge thus acquired, desiring to know whatever can be known of nature, and to wield whatever is powerful amongst the agencies of nature, and to possess whatever is profitable, and to covet whatever is pleasant to the natural man, you do more and more entangle yourselves in the mazes of falsehood, distress yourselves with the burden of carefulness, prepare yourselves for the issues of disappointment, and sell your souls to Satan for time and for eternity.

And the only cure of such natural knowledge, which "puffeth up," is faith, which worketh the "charity that buildeth up." Faith in the revelation of the word of God, will alone cast out the faith in the revelation of Satan contained in the visible world and the carnal man. The mystery of godliness discovereth the mystery of iniquity which now worketh in the children of disobedience. He whose name is "truth," alone prevaileth to destroy him whose name is "the liar and the deceiver." And therefore, the knowledge contained in the word of God, and the faith thereof as the word of God, must become the beginning of your redemption; as the falsehood of nature is the beginning of your bondage. And I assure you, that when you receive the great truth therein taught, of the blindness and corruption and ungodliness of human nature, of the darkness and bondage and thraldom of the visible creation, you have made a good step in the way from the kingdom of carefulness and misery, to the kingdom of carefulness and joy. For both kingdoms have their carefulness; the one yielding misery, the other yielding bliss. But there is a second step to be taken to complete the cure; which is, to know the redemption, and light, and life and liberty, which

are presented to human nature in the revelation of the Godhead, and their work of salvation by the humiliation of the Christ begun, by the ministry of the Holy Ghost carried on, and by the glorious manifestation of the Son of God to be perfected. I say not that the knowledge of the humiliation of Christ alone, nor the knowledge of the Holy Spirit alone, nor the knowledge of the glory of Christ alone, can work our deliverance from the erroneous knowledge of the sight, and of the flesh, and of the world; but, that these taken together; or, in other words, the whole revelation of God, is able to disabuse the soul of Satan's craft and deceitfulness. Wherefore, men and brethren, bestir yourselves, and "search the Scriptures;" as men who, in the dead of night, endeavour to effect their escape from a gloomy and fatal dungeon: and even as such men do join their counsels and confederate their strength to break barred doors, and to leap fenced walls, and to escape into the blessed realms of light and liberty; so would ye, if you did but know the baseness and the doom of Satan's dark and noisome dungeon of error, strive to escape, take counsel with, and charitably help one another, and summon all men, yea, give the wide world to wit, that the earth and the inhabitants thereof may join with you and with all who know the way of deliverance, which hath come to light by the incarnation of God, and which will come into reality and possession by the revelation of the Lord from heaven. And this is the beginning of the remedy; to wit, faith in the word of God, which revealeth the things that are unseen and eternal.

The second cause of the malady of worldly carefulness is, our ineffectual endeavours to attain those impossibilities with which Satan hath possessed our belief. We expect to be satisfied in the possession of things which have in them no satisfaction to the soul; and so when we have them we are disappointed: which disappointment is only to be cured by the revelation to the soul, of those very things which will yield her satisfaction. We are careful of the body's health, thinking that therein is blessedness. We are careful concerning the health of our children, thinking that therein is blessedness. We are careful concerning worldly goods, thinking that

therein is blessedness. We are careful concerning our good report with men, thinking that therein is blessedness. And in general, we are careful to attain unto all the natural desires of our heart, thinking thereby to be completely blessed. And so Satan tortures us with a thousand points of carefulness, upon which he extends the body of our natural being: there is not a joint which he doth not rack; there is not a fibre which he doth not make to quiver; he distendeth us abroad, and mangleth us at his pleasure, because he is a murderer and a destroyer, and rejoiceth over his prey. But faith teacheth us that blessedness is not to be found in health, family, or estate, or human favour; but in the light of God's countenance, the love of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, in righteousness, faith, peace, and contentment;—which possessing, we are not miserable, though in affliction and sorrow, forsaken, and deserted of the world; blessed, though betrayed by our father's house, forsaken by our own children, persecuted and evil entreated of all men.

Now, the possession of these spiritual blessings, which are blessings indeed, and are able to change the very face of misery itself, is within the power of every man, by faith and by prayer. He seeketh not the impossible; he affecteth not the miserable; he is not in love with falsehood; but he seeketh that which is purchased for every believer, affecteth that which is desirable to every soul, and is in love with the very countenance and substance of God himself; and he shall receive to the very bounds of his desire, and be filled beyond the measure of his satisfaction. And there is nothing good worthy to be cared for, for which he cannot pray, not only for himself but for all men; for his father and his mother, his wife and his children, his kindred and his friends, his people and the world at large. And there is no emergency that can occur, for which he hath not a refuge in the bosom of God; and there is no affliction for which he hath not a comforter in the Holy Ghost; and there is no doubt nor perplexity for which he hath not a ready resolution in the word of the faith of Jesus. Prayer, prayer is possession; faithful prayer is sure possession, of all that the redeemed will of man can desire

from the will of God, into the unity and harmony of which it is redeemed by Christ. The man who is full of prayer is full of power; that is, of faithful prayer; for prayer without faith is given to the ear of the idle winds. I would rather have the gift of a brother's faithful prayers, than of his plentiful substance. And I feel, that when I have given to a brother my faithful prayers, I have given him my best and greatest gift. Therefore I say, that he who has faith to open the door of heaven, doth, in a manner, possess the store of heaven; which is large and abundant enough for all the wants of the needy earth. And thus it is that prayer is the second cure of carefulness. For if we could accomplish all the good we desire, there were no pain in carefulness, but it were an activity of well-doing, which is always delightful. But ah! how little have we of the much we desire! I cannot flee to all the wide-scattered friends whom I would now counsel in the ways of God; but I can commend every one of them to the Lord, and pray Him to send the omnipresent, omnipotent Teacher of righteousness, the Monitor of the Christian Church; that is, the Comforter, the Holy Ghost. And although I cannot expound the hundredth part of the truth which it is good for you to know, both by reason of my own incapacity and your dulness of hearing, and every other impediment: I can commend you to the Lord's own ministry, and so my soul is comforted. I cannot soothe my enemies, nor make them believe that I love them, Satan hath drawn such division between us; but I can commend them unto the Lord, with all forgiveness and earnest entreaty for their salvation. What a faculty is this of prayer! It extinguisheth the distance of places, it abolisheth the distinctions of persons, it comprehendeth all good desire; yea, and fulfilleth it likewise. For I reckon, as hath been said, that when a man has spread any matter before the Lord, and resigned it wholly to His care, he hath done his utmost for it, and hath only patiently to pursue his course of continual duty, and wait the answer of the Lord, not doubting that either that will be done which was besought, or something better, by Him whose will is perfect wisdom, and His word eternal goodness.

Well said the apostle, "Be careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God." He did not say with the Stoics, Make thy wants commensurate with thy power; cut off one affection, and another desire, until thou hast brought thy wide-spread being into a shapeless trunk, and concentrated the various outgoings of thy soul into one point of selfish pride: no, but he says, Thy wants, however many they be, spread before the Lord: make known in everything thy wants unto Him by prayer and supplication, increasing the intensity of thy request with the intensity of thy desire, and at the same time give thanks for what thou possessest, and beware that thy much asking proceedeth not out of a discontented, disquiet spirit, but hath a single eye to the comforting of thine own soul, by making known unto the Lord that which thou deemest to be good, and asking it of Him for the sake of His goodness and grace, and the prosperity of the kingdom of Christ upon the earth.

Hear you this, brethren; and will you give ear to it? Will you set your hearts at ease by opening them unto God? Will you enumerate your cares of parents, children, estate, good name, and prosperity unto the Lord? Tell them over. Reckon them up. And see whether they be such as the Lord's ear may be solicited withal. And know that He is very generous, exceeding gracious: good unto all men is the Lord, and very near unto all who call upon His name. And take not up the ascetic notion that you should not ask for temporal goods, seeing godliness hath the promise both of the life which now is, and of the life which is to come. Ask what ye please, and it shall be given to you; but ask in faith, nothing doubting. For he that doubteth is like a wave of the sea, driven of the winds and tossed. Let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord. Moreover, see that ye ask for the glory of God, and the eternal profit of the souls of men, not for a present convenience, or to consume it on your own lusts. James saith, "Ye ask and ye receive not, because ye ask amiss, to consume it on your lusts." Therefore it is so necessary that the knowledge of the revelation of Christ, concerning all truth and ends of holiness, should cast out our own selfish

and erroneous conceits; and that the Spirit of truth should have created in us a righteous spirit, in order that we might know what things to desire, what are our true wants, and what the true wants of our friends, and what the great wants of the Church and of the world; that we may take a deep interest therein, and weary the Lord with our supplications for the same.—See you not that there must be a teaching to pray, a teaching to desire, a teaching of the will, and a subordination of it to the will of God? This is the work of the Divine Word and Divine Spirit, who proceeded from the Father, in order to bring the soul into reconciliation with the Father, to harmonise and attune its desires to the purposes of God. And before there can be any outpouring of prayer, there must be an outpouring of the revelation of the Word, and an outpouring of the fellowship of the Spirit. The Spirit leadeth us unto Christ, and Christ leadeth us unto the Father; and in a holy harmony and union of the soul with the Father, the work of the Son and Spirit is perfected. Whence the importance of the weekly ministry; whence also the importance of church communion with one another, in order that the Word and Spirit, working effectually in us, may bring us into close communion with the Father. Truly the faithful preaching of the word, and the fellowship of the believers thereof, be the great nourishments of prayer, which is the great cure of carefulness, and cause of peace to the troubled and anxious soul: as it is written, "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds in Jesus Christ."

And this is the cure of the third evil effect of carefulness, that it shipwrecks our peace among the dark uncertainties of the future. The future is known only to the Lord, and no one hath power over it but He; for, though by the power of science and calculation the probabilities of certain things in the physical world can be shrewdly inferred, and by wisdom and experience moral changes can be discerned also, yet not with that certainty as to be surely relied upon, though sufficient in every man to set on foot infinite risks and adventures. And, accordingly, every man hath devices forecast for many days and many years to come. And there is in man's nature the strongest

tendency to believe that his prosperity will continue. He shrinketh from the anticipation of adversity, and death is seldom in his mind. The soul is always taken at unawares by calamity, and hardly any one can make up his mind to die. I have sometimes thought that the soul thus gave testimony to her own immortality; but I rather fear the truth to be, that she is so much engrossed with the visible world as to shrink from the thought of leaving it, and so conscious of unfitness for the invisible world as to dread to enter upon it. For surely every possibility in the future is contemplated more than the only certainty in it, which is death. There is no scheme which doth not reach unto the future, no desire nor wish that has not been realised in its dark womb. Every man knows how to-morrow is forestalled by the mind: and who is he that can say, "I take no thought for it; sufficient for the day is the evil thereof?" Now, from this future, wherein we all speculate and traffic so much, care doth reap a plentiful harvest of bitterness. What anxieties of the merchant after his outward-and-homeward-bound adventures! what anxieties of the trader after his outstanding accounts! what anxieties of the mother after her children at home and abroad! what anxiety of all for the continuance and enlargement of their worldly estate! and what disappointments, what vexations, and long-enduring griefs, when these are frustrated by calamity; when the world becomes unfortunate, and the times perilous, as during the time that is past! Let the experience of the past be the comment upon this head of my discourse, and prove to you how open you lie at the mercy of this changeable world. And let me tell you, that Satan hath a spiteful delight in inflicting disappointment and pain. He tempts men with riches and ambition, till he hath got them fairly in his power; and then he plays with them upon his hook, hither and thither, at his will, reaping joy to his malice from all their writhing and misery. So much prosperity as will purchase the soul, then so much anxiety or so much adversity as the soul will bear. For certain it is that he knoweth not how to bless, and cannot endure the sight of blessedness. His intent is to kill peace and blessedness; which in the spirit he doth by anxiety and care, in the body

by disease and death. But besides that he wieldeth the kingdom only for the aggravation of misery, we should know that he is to be bereaved of the kingdom itself, stripped of it, and, with all who are his subjects, consumed from the presence of the Lord; and the time is at hand. So that every one who cleaveth to the love of visible things, is like a man who joins the fortunes of a desperado. Who doth not see that Satan's kingdom is in jeopardy; and hardly hangeth together; that the judgment is about to sit, or is actually sitting, upon the world? Kingdoms in distress; the body of the people discontented everywhere; infidelity, the forerunner and parent of anarchy and destruction, widely spreading; and men's hearts trembling with the apprehension of the things which are to come upon the earth. Satan hath but a very short time to hold his kingdom, and the kingdom of glory shall soon be revealed. It is a desperate thing to be confederate with him; and I entreat you to break loose from his bonds, to become subjects of Christ's suffering yet hopeful kingdom, of which the power and dominion shall soon arrive: and to cast your care upon God, who careth for you: as it is written, "Commit your way unto the Lord; trust also in him: he will bring it to pass." Those things which trouble the peace of thy soul, commit to God's safe-keeping, and "He will bring forth thy righteousness like the light, and thy judgment like the noon-day." Turn your cares into prayers, and your anxieties into supplications. Give into His hands your whole lot, in whose hands are the issues from death. To Him, who is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, be joined; and you shall begin to experience the growth of the same unchangeableness in your soul: your feet shall be in a sure place, and your house shall be founded upon a rock, against which no windy storm nor deluge of adversity shall prevail; and your path shall be as the morning light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

Therefore, brethren, I do entreat you, by the coming of the Lord and our gathering together unto Him, to sit very loose to the things of the present evil world, and to guard against setting value upon any earthly place or commodity, further than as you may therein and therewith glorify the Lord your

God. I do earnestly entreat you to be content with your lot and condition, as being the will and appointment of the Lord; and not to launch your precious souls upon Satan's seas, lest you come into peril and be shipwrecked. I pray you to confide your whole case, and the keeping of it, unto the Lord, who careth for you: and if ye will lay up treasures, brethren, be it in heaven; and if you will covet honour, let it be to sit high in His kingdom, which is by drinking deep of the cup of humility. O brethren, I am rejoiced to find, from day to day, and from week to week, that the true spiritual Church is more and more laying hold of the joy set before them, and that the formal Church is shewing its formality by despising it. And shall you be found backward, who have with much patience been instructed in this mystery? I trust not. You surely will not break yourselves upon that Stone which was laid in Zion, nor be among those despisers on whom it shall fall and grind them to powder. Shew that the doctrine of the near coming of the Lord, which in an apostle's mouth was so effectual in delivering the first Christians from all the powers of this present evil world, hath not lost its effect, at a time when we stand so much nearer, as we believe so very close upon, the event: shew that it is powerful to the destruction of Satan's kingdom in your soul. Let the politician be a politician no more, but the good citizen of a city not yet manifested. Let the speculating tradesman be no more speculative, but patient in his industrious calling, waiting for the portion that is to come. Ye anxious mothers, be anxious for your children's advancement in Christ's, not in Satan's, kingdom. Ye careful housewives, care for the one thing needful, the good part, that shall not be taken away from you. Ye priests, have the house in order, for the Householder hath given note and warning of His coming. Ye masters of the vineyard, look to your accounts, for the reckoning time is near. Ye gods, execute righteous judgment, oppress not the poor, regard the widow and judge the fatherless; or ye shall die like men, and fall like Satan, one of the princes. Ye rich men, weep and howl for the desolations that are about to come upon you: ye cruel oppressors, be terribly afraid, for the cry of the oppressed ones ascendeth unto the ears of the Lord God of Sabaoth. Ye kings and

judges of the earth, do homage to the Son, lest ye perish from the way, if once His wrath begin to burn: blessed are all they that put their trust in Him.

Finally, in order to impress upon your minds the awful importance of all these things which I have laid down under this the third head of our discourse, I do entreat you to bear in mind the end and purpose of our Lord by the whole parable, which was no less than to assure His disciples, and all the world which would give Him ear, that the word of the gospel preached by Him, and to be preached by His Church until He should come again, would utterly fail of taking root; or, if it took a root, of producing ripe fruit, in any of those three great classes of men which we have shewn to be signified under the emblems of the wayside, the thin and stony soil, and the thorns—that is, the hard and proud of heart, the gay and light-minded, the busy and careful. I do pray you, to whom I preach this gospel of the kingdom, to give good heed, and evermore to bear in mind the word and lesson of the Lord which we are enforcing, and not to lose it in the multitude of arguments and illustrations, which we bring from all quarters of human experience, in order to stir up all minds to thought, and all hearts to meditate. The lesson is this—for it will bear to be often repeated—that the preaching of the gospel cannot prevail against any one of those conditions of the natural man treated of in the three preceding lectures, which do, every one, present a sufficient barrier and obstacle to the power of the word of God. For though it be true in the end, that the word of God shall prevail against all His enemies on the earth,—for He must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet,—that is not to take place in the present dispensation, but the future one; which are never to be intermingled together: for if the forms and ideas of the Mosaic dispensation would not contain the spirit of Christ, which was only the fulfilment of the former, both belonging to the earthly things, insomuch that the Lord compared the attempt to the foolish one of putting new wine into old rotten bottles, or new cloth into an old worn-out garment; how much less ought we to endeavour to bound and limit the things of the future dispensation within the ideas proper to this spiritual

dispensation? Which is what they do when they would crush you the millennium and all its glorious attributes into the narrow conditions of the elect Church; losing the very idea of election in universality, and the idea of universality in that of Church. There is a Church and a kingdom: the Church is now, the kingdom is hereafter: and they may by no means, without great and grievous scandal to both, be confounded. Therefore, I say unto you, who live under the spiritual, not the royal dispensation of the word, that Satan hath still a place upon the earth; yea, hath the kingdoms, and the glory of the kingdoms, and giveth them to whomsoever he willeth: and I give you to wit, that he hath many a numerous troop, marshalled under various commanders, whose quarters the word of God cannot reach; of which army of Satan I have discovered the three great divisions, shewing you all their strong and their weak points: and I solemnly charge you that you cannot serve these and serve Christ also: you cannot obey their word, and obey the word of God also: and whosoever is enamoured of his quarters in the present world, and content with his allowances, and preferreth to abide as he is, must die the death. There is no trimming between the world that is, and the world that is to come; there is no serving of God and mammon; there is no fellowship between light and darkness, between Christ and Belial, between the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error. Therefore make up your account, and choose which ye will serve; the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, or the gods of this present evil world. If ye are prepared to serve God, then my preaching may profit you—that is, if I preach the true and faithful word of the kingdom—but if not, not. Therefore be resolved. There is no middle course: him that is neither hot nor cold, the Lord is ready to spue out of His mouth.

Oh that the Lord would bring it home to men's minds, that there are things which the preaching of the word cannot accomplish,—many, very many things: it cannot move a man against his will, it cannot cast Satan out whether the possessed man will or not. Even under our Lord's personal ministry, it required faith to be healed; and all the Divine

wisdom and power of His doctrine, and all the miraculous manifestation of the Holy Spirit, could not convert the chiefs and leaders of that generation, who came to a fearful end. No more will it convert the proud spirits, the political spirits, the earthly spirits of this generation, that they might be healed. And why? because their several errors and delusions have blinded their eyes that they should not see, and closed their ears that they should not hear, and hardened their hearts that they should not understand. Every man who would receive the kingdom of Jesus must come forth out of his city and cantonment, without the gate, bearing his reproach. He must be content to forsake all, and follow Him. For His people do still dwell alone. They are still separate from all men. And you must come and join us. We tell you, citizens of the world, that you shall all perish; who have heard the gospel and rejected it. Reject it, and you perish; receive it, and take up your cross and come forth. We shall teach you how to bless those from whom you came out, to bless and not to curse, to profit them by a faithful and true witness for the sake of truth, and to condemn them if they reject it. But, above all, how to save your own souls, which cannot otherwise be saved but by this word which we preach unto you. That there is no name given under heaven by which men can be saved, but the name of Jesus.

LECTURE IV.

THE SEED WHICH FELL ON THE SOIL OF A GOOD AND HONEST HEART, AND BROUGHT FORTH ABUNDANTLY.

THE remarks which we made in our Introductory Lecture concerning the theology of nature, do sufficiently explain the necessity of parables and symbols, in order to express spiritual things: and they also explain the necessity of poetical imagery, in order to express the invisible working of the mind and heart of man. Forasmuch as they shew that the elemental, the vegetable, the animal, the mental world, are all forms of the same redemption from death by the sacrifice of Christ, and exemplifications of the laws and functions and properties of the spiritual life. The propagations of natural life, the preservations of life, its beautiful forms and appearance; its healthy glows and sickly hues; its buddings, and shootings, and luxuriant unfoldings; and again, its droopings, decayings, diseases, and death; with all other, the various conditions in which it is found, are alike as to their principle of operation, which is the redemption of Christ Jesus; and more or less distinct illustrations of the grace, and goodness, and righteousness, and judgment, and other attributes which are in Him: and, therefore, they are all illustrative of one another, beginning from the lowest and ascending to the highest. And this is an idea as important, as I believe it to be true, which leadeth us to recognise the work of Christ in everything; and to see that all things created, wicked though they be, that the very wickedness in them, and Satan the lord of the wickedness, are yet forced to labour for the glory of God, and to testify of their own approaching end and of the renovation of the state in which they now exist; which teacheth us how to hallow the creature, and to use it to the honour of God the Creator; which sheweth us that every

creature of God is good; and that all things are working together for good to them who love God, and are the called according to His purpose. It taketh the mystery off the present condition of things; and unsloughs, if I may so speak, their condition which is yet to be, and shews us how, even at present, under the veils of sense and time, all things are still under man; that the spiritual man is the lord, even now; and that the law which governs the animal, the vegetable, and the elemental worlds, is for the end of making them most dutiful servants and faithful interpreters of the spiritual world, to the children of the Spirit for whose sake they exist.

But, though these be all-important lessons of Christian theology, and very instructive of the restraining grace and coming redemption of God, I would not have spent so much pains, or occupied so much time upon them, in the Introductory Lecture, had it not been for the direct end of explaining the fourth part of this parable, whereof we would first examine the doctrine. To preserve any meaning in this part of the parable, we must admit that the soil into which the seed of the word is cast hath essentially to do with the fruitfulness of the seed. For if it hath a large and chief influence in the fruitlessness of it, as we have set forth at large in our three former lectures, so as to bring these three classes into the condition of apostates, and make them obnoxious to all judgment,—as it is written; "For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: but that which beareth thorns and briers, is rejected, and nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned,"—then also to the fructifying of the seed ought the soil to bring an essential influence, otherwise the parable is good for nothing but to lead astray. But what influence can the nature of man have of a favourable and predisposing kind? for is it not "evil, and that continually?" Or what can this good and honest heart be, which is apt to bear the fruits of righteousness? for is not the heart of man "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked?"—as it is written, "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, blasphemies." All this I heartily agree to, and teach continually, that nature

is cursed in her four corners, fallen in all her places, and wicked, desperately wicked, in the very bent of her will and the disposition of her being. And what, then, is this soil of "a good and honest heart," which must co-operate with the seed in order to bring forth the fruits of righteousness; which not in one case, but in every case, must co-operate with it; yea, which must be there before it?

Is it what the world calls a good natural disposition, with which some men are born? This it cannot be; for if that were a preliminary requisite, then the gospel would only be for a part of men, and the children of the kingdom would be born of flesh and blood, and the law of the flesh would not be contrary to the law of the Spirit. This notion we utterly reject; for it is the very essence of the Arminian heresy, which gives a certain co-operative power unto the creature, and so filcheth all the glory from God. If, then, this co-operative, yea, and precedent principle, be not in the person of man, is it in his education? or is it in civilisation? or, in general, is it to be found in his outward circumstances? This I reject, because I have rejected the former; being well assured, that if the quality of pure and essential goodness be not found in any one man, it will not be found in any two men, nor in any combination of men, nor in any of the works of men. For if good dispositions could in any way of nature be produced in us, then the children of God were born of the will of men; or if good works before God—that is, fruits of righteousness—could by any combination of means, discovered or discoverable, be brought to light, then what need were there for the regeneration of the Holy Ghost? Besides, it is such a preposterous thing to put man's circumstances before man! As if the circumstantial things—the climate of the heavens, or the qualities of the ground, or the secret and subtle influences of the stars, or the mechanical arts, or any other conditional things—were made to rule over man, and man were not made to rule over them. As if he might be fallen from all blessedness, and lost to all good, and they not be so, but still retain some secret fire of heaven in them, and subtle prize of divine virtue, to those moral alchymists who can work it out of them by co-operative societies, and mechanic schools, and infidel univer-

sities, and other mysteries of these adepts in moral alchymy, or jugglers in the service of Satan.

But still the stone lies at the foot of the hill, and how is it to be rolled up or taken away? The question resteth unresolved. But what is this soil of "a good and honest heart," which must be already in existence before the Sower of seed —that is the Son of man, who preacheth the gospel of the kingdom—can receive any fruits into His garner? Can it, saith a third, more orthodoxly and religiously disposed, be this outward visible Church, and the ordinances of religion, which we all know must be observed and diligently kept before any fruit of righteousness will be produced? But this will do no better than the others. For, first, I take it that the chief of the ordinances of religion—the ministry of the word and the sacraments—are nothing but the sowing of the seed: and the Church visible doth now the office which the Son of man did while on earth, who sent His apostles, and they their successors, and so on until our times, into all the world, to preach the gospel, and establish a Church for the preaching and full setting of the gospel. The "good and honest heart," therefore, ought to be something different from these, as the soil is different both from the seed and the Sower of the seed. Besides, however sacred be the forms of the ordinances of religion, and however profitable their use when connected with the spiritual substance and reality thereof; they are not, when separated thence, of any profit to any one, but a hypocrisy, a profanation, a hardening of the heart to holy things, a turning away from the living waters of the fountain, and a great offence to the Divine Persons who have presented us with these most precious gifts: and, therefore, so far from preparing a soil, they do rather scourge the soil, and wholly disqualify it for receiving the holy seed. Witness the case of the Jews whom our Saviour addressed: how little their scrupulous adherence to forms did prepare them for receiving the seed of the great Sower of the earth! And, therefore, I think this can as little be admitted for the right solution of the difficulty as the other two: and besides these three, my ingenuity can suggest to me no other; for if this prerequisite of "a good and honest heart" be not in the natural disposition, be not in the education and

civil institutions of society, be not in the forms and ordinances of the visible Church, where should it be; for these seem to include the whole visible ordinances of God and man for the well-being of mankind?

I answer, it is in all of these, when rightly interpreted as ordinances of redemption and gifts of grace, and when rightly applied to us by the Holy Spirit of God; and it is in none of them, when interpreted merely as the law and course of nature, and used according to the inclinations of nature. The soil of "a good and honest heart," is produced by an operation of the Holy Spirit upon this our fallen nature through the means of those fallen things which are around us. As in the creation He did move at first upon the void and formless waters, before the Word said "Let there be light," in order to prepare them for receiving the forms which the Word had proposed to give them; so in the regeneration He doth prepare for the seed of the Sower, which is the same word of the Son of God, by working upon the moral chaos of man's nature a readiness to receive the seed when it shall be cast into it. And as the same creating Spirit doth, by many previous processes of nourishment and health and growth, prepare every animal for conceiving seed, and bringing forth its kind; so doth He, long before the seed of the word of God is sown in the heart, prepare every heart with a relish, yea, and with a longing for the same. He maketh the appetite before He bringeth the meat: and having brought the meat, He giveth power to digest it, and so reneweth the decayed face of nature.

Now, this view of the subject resulteth straightway from the true doctrine of the Holy Ghost as a Person in the blessed Trinity. For as the Father doth, in the primeval and one only complete act of His will, generate the Son, in whom are included, and through whom are operated, all the various particular acts thereof; so from the Father and the Son, in their harmonious union, proceedeth the Holy Ghost; through whom, before creation, in the depths of eternity, the Son expresseth unto the Father the perfect unity of His being, notwithstanding that distinctness of personality which He had bestowed upon Him. The self-existence of the Son, and the

self-existence of the Father would constitute them twain in existence, as well as in personality, were it not for the procession of the Holy Ghost from both, in whose self-existing intercommunion they behold, and are satisfied, with their oneness. This is the idea of the Godhead before creation, their first work: and this idea will reveal to us the order of creation, and of redemption, and of every work, to be, as hath been said above, first by a preparatory work of the Spirit, then by a personal work of the Son, unto the end of the manifestation and perfect obedience of the Father's will. For, the Spirit being originated both from the Father and the Son, must in His self-existent being represent the unity and harmony of these two self-existent Beings: and by going forth to set on foot any mighty work, and creating the elemental life of it, He doth thereby, in working His own personal and distinct work, so far forth express their unity and oneness of substance; while by staying at a certain point, and confessing His inability to proceed further, He doth give honour to the superior place, and room for the independent self-existency of the Son: who now cometh forth, whether as the Word, or as the only-begotten Son, (for He is both from all eternity in His very substance,) to give forms, and functions, and laws of being: yet all the while declaring that He can work nothing by Himself, nor put will into anything, being Himself but the great offspring of the Father's will, for the decree of which every work waiteth, and without which no work of the Godhead is complete. And the work being complete doth acknowledge the origination of its life to the Spirit, the excellent form and peculiar blessedness of its life to the Son, the end and continual support of its life to the Father's will.

Now, here is a work to be done; a lost and fallen world is to be recovered from the power of sin; and it is the purpose of the Godhead to restore it. It is their purpose to restore it, for the end of expelling infirmity out of the creature, and putting sin and sinful beings for ever into a state of subjection and inefficiency. And how is this greatest of all works to be accomplished? Like every other work of the Godhead must it be accomplished. The Spirit first proceedeth forth to begin the work: He arresteth all things on their road to death, and

impregnates the mortal mixture with a principle of life; and in doing so He testifieth of the Father and the Son, by possessing everything with a desire and propensity to life, and with a certain prophetic indication of that form of life which it should yet be brought unto. This is "the groaning and travailing of all creatures together until now;" while to man it is the ministry of promise and prophecy, of type and semblance; the fleshly rudiments of a Church, which at first were given unto all men, and are still found to exist amongst all men, in some apprehension of a God, and of sin, and of a judgment, and of a heaven and a hell, and of an immortality; besides other mythological mysteries, which a stranger understandeth not, and which they themselves also have in some degree forgotten to interpret. Still, however, it is the work of the Spirit in their conscience, pointing to the perfect work of redemption which was in the mind of the Godhead, and which He had come forth to set on foot. And His work is all which was done amongst men, which was done upon the visible material world, to give all things their present constitutions, so very different from that condition of death to which they were doomed by the curse of God.

This preparation doth the Spirit make for the coming of the Son: and here He waiteth, until the Son shall come and give the form and law of the regeneration; being Himself in His flesh the seed which must be cast into the ground, the type of the travailing universe; as in His resurrection He is the type of the delivered universe. I mean, that the Holy Ghost, who, after the Fall, had brought all things into a travailing condition, suffering and groaning, and conscious of a something that was to come forth, did make the flesh of Christ in the completeness and perfectness of the suffering creature, burdened with the substance of all burdens, distressed with the weakness of all infirmities, and suffering the excruciation of all diseases, and bearing the amount of all wrath and indignation of God; yet withal having the fulness of all knowledge, the brightness of all prophecy, the assurance of all faith towards that glory which was to come forth of Him after He should have been cast into the earth. Whereupon, after that Christ hath exhibited the true type of the sufferer, the Spirit

again proceedeth to bring the world under the same extreme bondage of distress; at the same time possessing them with the like brightness and clearness of prophecy concerning their future glory; and declaring unto men, that no one can come unto the similitude of Jesus, unless he be drawn thereto by the Father, and born again of the Holy Ghost proceeding from the Father. And those who come out, and are joined to the Sufferer, in order hereafter to be joined to the Glorified One, do constitute the Church: which must know nothing but burdens, and distresses, and humiliations, during the dark and cloudy day; while, at the same time, she is filled with the consolation, and hope, and assurance of good things to come. And thus far the work of the Godhead hath been manifested; no further, than to bring nature into a state of unconscious, and the will of renewed men into a state conscious bondage, after the type of Christ's humiliation, with the promise of a future deliverance after the type of His resurrection.

Now, that which we have exhibited on the large scale of the historical progress of the work of the Godhead in the redemption of the world, which also we deduced from the doctrine of the Trinity, is the same with that which is done in the case of every individual upon whom He worketh. The Son cometh not to sow the seed until a preparatory work hath been done by the Holy Ghost upon the elements of our being. And what is this? It is the preparing of a soil to receive it. Just as He prepared the world for the receiving of Christ by all that had taken place from the creation; so, I say, by all that takes place from our birth the Holy Spirit doth prepare in us a soil for receiving and fructifying the seed of the word which is afterwards to be sown therein. And this He doth previous to our regeneration; for our regeneration is the impregnation with the seed of the word, its quickening within us: "being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." And therefore this work of preparing the soil is without any help of the word of God, which, being once quickened, will ripen; there being no miscarriages, nor abortions, nor still-births, in the work of God's quickening Spirit, as those Arminians and Methodists dream. And if it be without the

help of the word of God, by what means is it then brought about? By means of those preparatory materials of the redemption, which were wrought by Him for this very end in the constitution of all things which have been since the creation,—by the good and honest use of the natural life of the mind; by the good and honest use of the natural life of the body; by the good and honest use of the natural life of all creatures which are around us; by the good and honest use of the constitutions and laws of civil society in which we dwell; and, finally, by the good and honest use of the visible Church, which God hath planted in the world to be unto it a continual model and type of what it should be. By teaching unto men the good ends of all these things, for which He did constitute them, and enabling men to take hold of them for these same ends, the Spirit doth work in the hearts of men a fit soil for receiving the seed of the word when it shall be sown therein.

For it was not to be expected, that, when the Spirit so diligently prepared the world for the coming of Christ, He should neglect this preparatory work in the soul of man, for which the world was created, is preserved, and wrought upon. It is not to be believed, that, seeing there is a season of human life in every one during which he is incapable of receiving the preached word, that the Spirit, who is the great Author of life, should not be occupied during the same in endeavouring to make a preparation for the coming of the Son of man. If the law of all life, vegetable and animal, be a preparation for and a servant of the spiritual life, how much more ought the laws of human life and human well-being to be subservient thereto? In one word, what is human life, and all life, but a work of the Spirit, "the Lord and giver of life?" And if so, for whom doth the Spirit work, but for Christ? and of whom doth He bear testimony, but of Christ? It can in no manner be doubted, therefore, that life in man, and the laws of man's well-being, are indeed a work preparatory for the knowledge of the gospel. And this not any particular act, but the honesty or dishonesty of every act, the good or evil course according to which our life has been spent; whether we have followed after wisdom or folly; whether we have

walked in the ways of truth or of error; whether we have listened to the solicitations of evil, with which the world is filled, or to the continual suggestions of good, which are presented to our conscience; whether we have used our talents well, according to the light which God hath given us, or whether we have used them ill, according to the same light; whether we have obeyed the law of humanity towards the lower animals; whether we have followed knowledge and industry toward the inanimate creatures; whether we have followed honesty and uprightness towards all men, and treated every one according to his place and station; whether we have followed the law of chastity, continence, and temperance towards our body,—the law of sincerity and truth in our words, and of gentleness and graciousness in our minds; whether we have made a right use of all the advantages and opportunities which God hath given us; and, in short, whether we have sought to cultivate an honest, or give loose to the inclinations of a dishonest heart.

That I may take the due advantage and make the proper use of these observations, let me now return to the Lord's similitude, and give you a little insight into what is signified in husbandry by a good soil; and explain to you by what means it is produced, in order that you may perceive how very apt a similitude it is for expressing the manner in which a good disposition is wrought in men, by the right use of all those means and opportunities, which are fit for receiving and retaining and fructifying the seed of the word.

Those soils which are the most productive, are called vegetable, to distinguish them from sandy and clayey soils; and, as their name imports, they are produced from the decay of a succession of vegetable productions. It is by much bearing in a lower kind that they attain their fertility in a higher. For everything is so created and constituted of God, as to be able to fructify the seeds of some one plant or another. The very rock, when exposed to the heat of the sun, you will find covered with a moss, then with a lichen, and then perhaps with a grass; and so on, according to a succession which my knowledge of the vegetable kingdom doth not enable me to

describe. And when the plant, of whatever kind it is, hath come to perfection, and yielded its stem and leaves and fruits and seeds, all these, except the seed, decay, and resolve themselves into earth again; whereby another coating is furnished to the ground; and so by much bearing a good and deep soil is at length produced, fit for the seeds of the husbandman. In like manner it is in man, that by much bearing of fruits in the lower degrees of instinct and knowledge, of kindly feelings and honest practices, a soil in due time is prepared which will receive and fructify the seed of the word of God, and bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, to the praise and the glory of God.

It is further to be observed, that the plants and seeds which are first produced by any soil in this progress towards fertility, are of an inferior kind in the scale of vegetable life, and fit only for the nourishment of insects and fowls, but not for the nourishment of man or of beast, or at least in a very insufficient degree. But chiefly, it would seem, are they ordained of God for this very end of preparing a soil upon which the richer fruits and more nourishing plants may grow; the production of the lower kind being, as it were, to serve as the groundwork for the production of the higher kind. And so in human nature the right education and training of children in the ways of understanding, and truth, and honesty, and dutifulness, is to be diligently ensued; not so much for the present advantages or disadvantages, though these be many, but with a long-sighted wisdom to the future man, and a full conviction that we are thereby laying the materials for a more precious husbandry of spiritual things, to be carried on by an omnipotent and invisible hand.

And still further it is to be observed, that if, in due time, when the soil hath been ripened for the tillage of animal food, it should not be turned to this use, then doth it change its nature, and heave up into moss, or corrupt into marsh, or take on some other unproductive and even noxious quality;—whereby nature doth signify, that, when she has laboured so long for man's support and well-being, if he will not profit by her care, she will straightway avenge his neglect of her by something troublous to his convenience, offensive to his taste, or even destructive to his life. This again teacheth us, that,

after a man has been reared up in the observation of all the duties, and the practice of all the moralities, and the study of all the faculties of his nature and opportunities of his place; if he refuse the seed of the word of God, for which all the rest is but the preparation, or if you withold it from him, he will, for want of the wholesome influences thereof, become puffed up with pride, filled with conceit, intoxicated with power, or in some other way evil-conditioned, the end of whom will be worse than the beginning.

If we look a little closer into the foreordained laws of nature, and consider what a plant is, we shall wonder yet more at the typical mystery of creation. The seeds of plants are so constituted of God as each to need a soil fit for its production—some taking a thinner and some a deeper, some a colder and some a warmer bed—in which to put forth that vegetative life wherewith God hath endowed them: and having found the fit and proper soil, the seed, obedient to God's creative word, doth begin to corrupt and die, that it may afterwards begin to live. It first obeys the curse of death, which hath passed upon all things, and hastens to die: but, lo! at the very instant when it seems disorganised, it for the first time doth begin to live; for hitherto it had been hard, dry, and fixed in size and form, while it remained sound and incorrupt: but, now that it begins to corrupt, lo! it puts forth many shoots, and promises a very great increase! This also hath its exact counterpart in the quickening of the seed of the word, which, when it springs to life within a man, doth make its way by mortifying the old man with his corruptions and lusts, humbling him, and paining him, as with the pains of conception; which is the repentance, or change of mind, that goes hand in hand with the quickening faith of God's word, and cannot be separated from it in any one instance. But that of which it is the true emblem, is our being laid in the grave: "Except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it beareth much fruit." So spake Jesus, in prediction of His death and resurrection: and so we say of the death of every believer, who hath been quickened with the incorruptible seed, that when he lieth down in the grave, his husk and slough doth corrupt, in order that the glorious and most fruitful branch of his risen

body may spring up and bear fruit in all seasons, and with all abundance.

Furthermore, by what ordained laws doth the seed of a plant increase? It first creates for itself a root to run along the soil, and a stem to shoot upwards into the air; the former to profit by the moisture, the latter to profit by the atmosphere: and from these two elements of water and air it deriveth all its substance. For, as I already observed in the Introductory Lecture, the earth, or soil, or stock into which you insert a graft, seems only to answer the purpose of conveying to its roots the moisture in the ground; while the leaves, with their many points and prickles and large expansions, gather that which is dispersed in the air. These likewise draw out of the air a substance, which is the breath of life; while they also carry off the corrupt matter, with which all life in this present intermediate state is attended. And thus it is that seeds swell into plants, and that plants live and thrive, by holding a continual active intercourse with the elements of air and water, and the power of heat. How instructive is this also, of the manner of the growth of the seed of the word! which is no sooner quickened of the Holy Ghost, than it impenetrates the whole inferior life of the sense and of the sight, spreading its roots far and wide over the whole element of our industry and occupation, in order to gather up all demonstrations of the Divine presence, and opportunities of the Divine blessing, which are to be met with everywhere in the field of the world. And without such an impenetration of all the offices and appointments of human affairs, the spiritual life is only apparent, a hasty flush of vegetation, which disappoints the husbandman. And as the upright stem, which shoots into the purer element, drinks the unpolluted dews, and inhales the vital principle of the air, while it dischargeth the noxious qualities of its own corruption, and of the corrupt earth wherein it is rooted; so doth the healthy plant of our heavenly Father's planting arise into the heavens of divine contemplation, bright hope, and blessed communion with our Light and Life; whereby the noxious earthiness which is contracted in the under regions of worldly duty is exhaled, and the pure element of heaven is inhaled into the soul.

Moreover, as the earth is only a bed for the seed, and a bath for the roots which come out of the seed; so is the plant, with all its roots and stem, and many leaves and flowers, yea, and fruits, only an apparatus of God's constructing for producing other seeds; which being ripened, and having dropped themselves upon the ground, or into the lap of the gatherer, the plant, after its time of bearing is past—be it a year, or many years, or some part of a year—doth straightway begin to resolve itself into dust; which repayeth the soil with a plentiful tribute, and addeth to its stock, (for plants take up little or no soil into themselves;) and thus the earth layeth up in the autumn and the winter a store of strength and vigour for the labours of spring and summer. But now the soil is deeper and richer than it was before, and will bear a plant of better quality and greater productiveness; and so a better and a better still, by continually reproducing; until, from being as barren as the highway, (for even a highway, when left to nature, passeth through this process of fertilising itself,) from being a thin soil which cannot bear the sun, it cometh to be rich, deep, and nutritious, fit for the most productive plants of the husbandman. So also, regarding each spiritual man as a plant of God impregnated by the seed of the word, I may say, that all his labours on this side the grave should go to the continuing and increasing of the fertile soil of another generation, into which the seed of the kingdom may be cast; but for himself doth only serve the end of producing a single seed, which, falling into the seed-bed of the grave, may grow up and flourish through eternity. And, by the succession of such divine productions, the soil of the world is wonderfully fertilised, the boundaries of the Church extended, and the numbers which are gathered into the garner of God infinitely increased, to His honour and glory.

And what now doth the husbandman, when God hath thus provided him with a fruitful soil? He taketh the seeds which are found most profitable to the nourishment of man, and of the living creatures which minister to man; and these most wholesome seeds he soweth in the soil, when he hath prepared it, according to his best skill, for receiving, retaining, and diffusing the moisture of the rains and dews of heaven: and

there he leaves them to obey the good and bountiful ordinance of self-producing which God hath endowed them withal. He soweth in hope, and waiteth on, expecting God to send the former and the latter rains: and if weeds spring up amongst the grain, especially if they be of that eastern kind called tares—which in the blade and in the ear is so exceedingly like wheat that you can hardly by any means know the one from the other—also lean and hungry stalks, rusted and mildewed, wild mustard, corn-cockle, and many other species of weeds, they must grow together till the harvest; when they are separated from one another as best may be; the one to be stored, the other to be destroyed. So did the great Husbandman of the world send forth His Holy Spirit into the ruinous wilderness of our fallen nature to prepare the soil, and make all things work together for the coming of the Sower: and by the combined labours of all things together, there was such a longing and expectation of His coming created over the face of the earth, as to have become an object of historical record. And when the Sower came He first sowed His own body a seed into the soil of death, whence it arose a glorious body for ever and ever. And He sent forth others to do likewise; whom the Spirit accompanied with dew and with rain; and so the world hath been sown and reaped until this day; or, I should say, only sown with the succession of souls who have deposited their bodies in the grave, waiting there till the time of the harvest, when they shall be separated from those counterfeit plants which were of the devil's planting, and be presented unto the Father, the great Husbandman, by the Son, as the fruits of His labour in the husbandry of the earth. And when it shall come to pass that, after all the forcing and fostering of the Divine husbandry, the earth yieldeth only briers and thorns, and hath ceased to minister to the Divine Persons by whom it hath been laboured, it is well-nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned.

And what is the harvest of the husbandman's laborious year? It is the taking not only of the seeds, but also of the stems which should have gone to restore the powers of the ground; and the ground will bear this twice, or even thrice, and sometimes oftener, when it is of that vegetable mold

whereof we have spoken above. And after the most precious qualities of the earth have been exhausted in producing the most precious and nutritious seeds, as wheat and other kinds of grain, it will still yield those of a less valuable kind for men, yet still profitable to his health, and most profitable to the lower creatures—as roots of various kinds, and grasses. But after having thus served out its strength diligently, it must have a sabbatical year or years of rest, to produce what groweth of itself: at which time the husbandman will seek to root out the weeds, and turn it over to the sun, and cherish it with animal and vegetable manures, and so bring it round again into good heart for seed-bearing. And in this way, by skilful and kindly management, by much labour of the beasts of burden and sweat of man's brow, by timeous rest and a well-studied rotation of crops, will the earth accomplish wonders in the way of producing.

It is thus that the life of the human body is supported by the laborious and long-continued labours of vegetable life: in all which labours, as I could shew, the life and death of animals bear an essential part. And though all be thus busily carried on for the sake of human life, yet man steppeth not in to reap the advantage from the beginning, but hath to wait a long time, until a soil hath been prepared for his tilling and dressing. There is no garden of Eden now, nor paradise of God, into whose ready fruitfulness, perfect beauty, and well-furnished store he may step, at once the lord and master and enjoyer of the whole. Everything, indeed, as heretofore, worketh for him, is fain to work for him; but it is slowly, and, as it were, niggardly; yet in the end surely and sufficiently, if he will lend himself to be the lord and master of the labour, as he was heretofore lord and master of the enjoyment. For nature laboured not heretofore in her productions. She travailed not in sorrow and pain, as now she doth; but loved to bring forth, and had great joy in her births. But now, from woman, the mother of mankind, down to the lowest thing that lives, all, all is in distress, and laboureth to bring forth, waileth much, and crieth daily for the coming of the Redeemer. All cry together, I say, and prophesy together of a Redeemer to come

—save the Church, which feeleth no bondage, and saith, "Ah! I have gotten Him: Ah! but I am well off: I am redeemed." O thou strumpet! and hast thou forgotten thine absent Husband? and hast thou ceased to feel the bondage of the flesh, and the oppression of the world? Or despisest thou thy high calling, to be king and priest upon the earth? Or what madness hath seized thee, that thou, who wast wont to groan within thyself, waiting for the adoption, and wast wont to lead the choir of all-complaining nature, because thou art set forth for the great example of severest suffering and the great heir of highest joy, shouldest now have become altogether careless of any advent, and shouldest say, "Trouble me not with such idle tales and enthusiastic ravings: it is sufficient for me to know that I will die; and what comes after, I am satisfied to be ignorant of. So, I say, Trouble me not; for am I not well off?" This state of feeling, I am sure, is no soil for producing any fellowship of the Lord's sufferings. But to return.—

As a good soil is produced upon the earth for the sower by much bearing in a lower kind than that to which he doth afterwards employ it; so is the soil of an honest and good heart produced in man by much bearing of fruit in a lower kind than that for which it is afterwards called upon by Christ, the Sower of the word of God. I mean, that there are lower spheres in which God hath constituted man to labour and bear fruit, whereof if he be neglectful he will disqualify himself, whereof if he be careful he will qualify himself, for receiving the spiritual seed of the word of God, for bringing forth the fruits of righteousness, unto the praise and the glory of God. And this was our doctrine concerning the soil of an honest and good heart mentioned in the parable; That it has a true precedency of the sowing, in order that the sowing may be productive: but it is not the seed, nor is it the water which the seed digests into nourishment: it is only the soil in which the incorruptible seed may make a lodgment, and receive the waters of the Holy Ghost, the former and the latter rains,—the dews, and the small rains which usher in the spring; the heavy and plentiful rains, which come before the harvest, to fill and fatten the ear. In which sense it

clearly appeareth, that man's soul is to God's husbandry what the earth's soil is to man's husbandry; and that the great end of all His dealings and dispensations with us, is to reclaim the barren wilderness and region of death, that it may produce the fruits of righteousness, to His own glory and to the defeat of all the powers of sin. For this end the Holy Ghost proceedeth forth from the Father and the Son, bringing with Him the will of the former and the life of the latter, in order to work a rudimental life in the conscience of men and in all inferior creatures; that man, rightly exercising his faculty of knowledge, and his endowment of power over all things, may be prepared for receiving the engrafted seed of the word, which the great Seedsman of God hath sown in the earth; and having power given him to quicken the same, and receiving the continual dews and refreshments of the Spirit, may go on producing and producing, until the Husbandman shall be pleased to gather him with the sickle of mercy into the garners of salvation, as a shock of corn in his season, as an ear of corn when it is fully ripe.

And now I should proceed to discourse concerning the right use of all the creatures of God, coming out of a right knowledge of their present fallen and future regenerate estate: but I feel the ground on which I am treading to be so very difficult and dangerous, and the snare of a previous righteousness of our own to be so besetting my path, that I would rather pause a moment, and examine again whether I have the firm ground of Scripture under my feet, and whether I be not derogating in any way from the honour and glory of the Lord my God. These outward creatures, of whose true condition I have been presenting to you the ordained laws of productiveness, I have already shewn you, have that form given them, and are sustained in that condition for a testimony unto the advent of Him who is to redeem them. But whence cometh the ability in man to bear those fruits of a lower kind which bring him up to the capacity of bearing the fruits of the word? I answer, it cometh from this our present sublapsarian constitution, which is not death but life; though life in a lower kind than that spiritual life, which it is of the will of the Father, of

the word of the Son, and of the work of the Spirit to produce in us. And I say, moreover, this faculty of self-nourishment up to the point of fitness for God's husbandry, cometh also from the knowledge of God's outward commandment, and the service of His visible Church. For it is not reasoning in a circle to say, that we receive a certain light from God's word, and a certain strength from God's Spirit, for the right occupation of our worldly trusts; and that we afterwards, in consequence thereof, but at God's free will and good pleasure, receive light and strength to become the sons of God, and heirs of the kingdom which is to come. There was a court of the Gentiles, as well as a court of Israel; a holy place, as well as a holy of holies: and there is a visible Church, as well as an invisible Church; a manifest providence, as well as a hidden grace: the knowledge of the former of which saveth not; the knowledge of the latter of which only saveth. But these both belong to the same building of God; and the one is, as it were, the porch of the other; the one the cradle and nursery and school for the other. And my argument is not limited to the visible Church: it includes the world, and the heathen, who know God only by the most gross and fabulous traditions, and worship Him in the most wicked and fantastical forms, rites, and ceremonies. Over them, and over the wide world of living men, I argue that there is a process of the formation of a soil, or of the destruction of a soil, for the seed of the word, going on in every son of Adam, arising out of his possession of life and reason, wholly independent upon the presence of a visible Church, or of any positive revelation; dependent merely upon the operations of that natural conscience which is in him, to reprove him of the evil of what is evil, and instruct him of the righteousness of what is righteous: according to that which is declared by St Paul of the heathen, that "they, not having the law, are a law unto themselves, their conscience bearing them witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another." At the same time, I argue, that this operation of natural knowledge, at the best, even in the most civilised and enlightened countries, and in the wisest and best-disciplined men, even where there is the knowledge of the gospel, and the ordinances of a visible Church,

can only proceed so far as to prepare a soil; and waits, in order to the production of spiritual fruits, for the Sower of the seed, which is Christ; and the planting of the great Husbandman, which is the Father; and the quickening of the Holy Ghost. And I further argue, that even for this preparatory work we are beholden to the same Divine Agent to whom we are beholden for the completion of the work; the two being, as I have already said, but parts of the one great work of God.

Wherefore it can with no propriety be argued, that the doctrine which I have deduced by direct inference, and by exact similitude illustrated from the parable, hath any part with the Arminian doctrine of the common influences of the Spirit, or the Papal doctrine of the grace of congruity; against which I maintain constantly the irresistibleness of the Holy Spirit in those whom the Father hath called unto the Son with an effectual calling, and the perseverance of all such unto life eternal. I have, indeed, been exhibiting a work of the Holy Spirit upon all men; which therefore may be called common: but it is not an indwelling of the Holy Spirit, or communication of the Divine substance in the person of the Holy Ghost, whereof I have been discoursing; but an outward work done in preparation for, and, as it were, to make a habitation fit for Him to dwell in—a work of the Spirit not posterior to the receiving of the divine seed, but previous thereto; not posterior to faith, but prior to faith; not under the gospel, nor yet under the law, but under nature, under the rudeness and wickedness of nature, whose thorough and incurable corruption I both believe and feel: a resisting, a restraining, a remonstrating work of the Spirit in the natural conscience, in the demonstrations of the outward creation, in the retributions and recompences of a present providence,—in short, in everything; which the most orthodox divines admit under the name of restraining grace, or God's overruling of wickedness to the manifestation of His own being and glory. This business of the Spirit in the voidless, formless waste, preparing it for the work of Christ, is that whereof alone I have been discoursing—and, as we shall see in the sequel, a most important subject of discourse indeed it is: for thereby God is justified upon those who have never heard the word of the gospel; who yet have

not been devoid of His gracious manifestations in the way whereof I have been treating; and whom He can, yea, and will, judge according to their light, and according to their law. I have been linking the out-field of human life into close communion with the fruitful Church; and shewing every one who heareth me, that he may in nowise, at no rate, and on no account, neglect any office or function of his wide-spread activity; that he may not with impunity give a loose to his multitudinous thoughts; or launch forth at random his idle, foolish words; or trifle with his time; or neglect his children —even as a natural man he may not, without bringing upon himself loss, by scourging the soil which is to produce the fruits of the kingdom. Those various movements of the outward and inward world, which are generally placed under the law of cause and effect, and referred to the course and operation of nature, I have been removing back to their proper origin, in the will of God, rendered gracious to a fallen world by the sacrifice of His own Son, and carried into effect by His Holy Spirit: thus rendering unto God the honour which is His due; and teaching you how to reverence His hand and hallow His name in everything which befalls you. It is indeed an important subject which we have been clearing from objection and delivering from suspicion. God grant us grace to open it, and lay it out in all its fulness and importance! But first I would connect the doctrine which hath been taught with one or two pregnant passages of Scripture, and shew how naturally it is represented therein.

Revelation is only the making known unto the creatures that which hath been in the Creator from the beginning; "is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen." There is, first, the formation of a creature fitted to receive the knowledge of it; and there is, secondly, the communicating of the knowledge for the capacity of which it was created: and no creature is capable of receiving more of the light of divine knowledge than that for which it was prepared in the purpose of God from the beginning. To know God, therefore, I may say, is the first end of any creature; yea, and of all intelligence. For unless we know Him, we can neither glorify Him nor at all enjoy Him; and revelation, so far from being a

secondary, and as it were a subsidiary, thing to creation, is truly the primary end of all beings. Now, the reason with which beings are endowed, is a dawning of the same light within themselves; and the intelligible world, which is made to be known and understood, is a reflector of the same light without us. Yea, and life itself is, as it were, but for the in-breeding of light: as it is written, "In Him," that is, "THE WORD," "was life, and the life was the light of men." And, in short, that is not life, in the true dignity of life, which is not prolific of the knowledge of God; and life eternal is no more than the perpetual continuance of the same knowledge: as it is written, "This is life eternal, that they should know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." And herein is true knowledge to be distinguished from what is falsely called knowledge,—that the one cometh out of life, and reproduceth life; whereas the other cometh out of death, like the light of corruption which is seen over a grave; and allureth unto death, yea, and causeth eternal death; like the light which the moth fluttereth around, plungeth into, and therein expireth. Which moth is the true emblem of apostate men and angels, whose light is their condemnation, because they rejected it: "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light." Whose faith is continually their fear; "They believe, and tremble:" and whose death, and destruction from the presence of the Lord, will be in the manifestation of the light of the glory of Christ: "Whom He shall destroy by the brightness of His coming."

Now, that the office of revelation, or manifestation, essentially and entirely appertaineth to the Son, by His most appropriate name of THE WORD, without which the mind or will were unknown, is declared in many parts of Scripture, especially in the beginning of John's Gospel and his First Epistle, to which we request your attention for the complete establishment of the doctrine which we have advanced. The first two verses of the Gospel declare the eternity of the Word, ("He was in the beginning;") His dwelling along with, yet distinct personality from, the Person called God, ("He was with God;") His unity of substance with that same Person,

("He was God;") and, to double the assurance thereof, it is repeated, ("the same was in the beginning with God.") Then follow in succession His acts and offices in time; which are: first, creation—"All things," or simply *all*, "were made by him; and without him was not any (*one*) thing made that was made," (ver. 3.) This same Divine function of creating all things, is by Paul ascribed unto the Son, in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Colossians, with an enumeration of the particulars contained under the word "all;" which maketh it to include not only things, but intelligences of every order, and beings of every name: "For by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him and for him," (ver. 16.) "By Him," as the creative power, without which not one thing was made, or could be made: "for Him," or "unto Him," as the end, in order to manifest what a fulness of power and various glory the Father had placed, and would in due time reveal, in Him.

The second function given to Him by the evangelist, is "Life:" "In Him was life." So saith our Lord himself; "I am the life." But the best commentary upon this Divine prerogative of Christ, is in the beginning of John's First Epistle: "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (for the life [or rather, 'even the life'] was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." Life, therefore, whose varieties we see, from the vegetable upwards unto man, proceedeth from Christ, who is the pure fountain of life; and all the successive outward appearances which the creatures manifest, all the powers which they put forth, with all the inward varieties of will, thought, and affection of which they are conscious, forasmuch as they all flow from the principle of life, and are by it sustained in the

unceasing progression, must have their first origin and beginning, as well as their continued support, from the Word of life and Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ. And, to make this doubly manifest, by making it historically true, when death had entered in, and the creatures were all brought under the curse, "the Life" was manifested to "destroy death, and him that had the power of death," and to give eternal life to as many of the heirs of death as should believe upon Him, who named Himself, and proved Himself to be, the Resurrection and the Life. So that by the entering in of death, this great prerogative of the Son, "to have life in Him," was shewed forth in the sight of all creatures; which could not otherwise be shewn forth in the sight of the universe; for when it was shewn forth heretofore in their creation, they were not in being to behold it. And so I may say generally, of every infirmity, and evil, and misery, which sin hath introduced; it doth but serve the end of shewing forth apart, and more conspicuously, the infinite fulness of power and grace which there is in the only begotten Son.

Of this life which was in the Word, the evangelist addeth one consequence, or fruit, in man; for he now contracteth the wideness of his discourse into the conditions of the human race: "And the life was the light of men." So spake Jesus himself: "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." So John, in his Epistle, immediately after the declaration of Him as "the Life," thus addeth: "This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another; and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin." So continually, under the Old Testament, light was used as the symbol of His abode; and we are said "clearly to see light, in that brightest light of Thine:" and, in the New Testament, we still look forward to "the brightness of His coming," and the dawning of the day, and the arising of the day-star upon our hearts. Now, what is this light of men which the Life is?

"In him was life, and the life was the light of men." It is, as I have said above, the light of reason, which groweth out of life, which is not separate from life in man, but is of the life and from the life; and as the life is overpowered by death, in consequence of the curse, so the light of reason in man is overclouded with darkness; but still it is existent in the being of man, to witness of God, and which should have known its parent Life, its parent Light, when He came. Therefore, addeth the evangelist, "The light shineth in darkness;" that darkness within the soul, which is, to reason, the cloud, and the mist, and the shadow of death. And whence proceedeth this darkness? It proceedeth from sin, which hath subjected all the creatures; in whom the law of life and the law of decay and death are, as it were, struggling for the pre-eminency. A life there is, but it hath no stability, nor certainty, nor continuance: evermore it groans, and laments, and grieves over its honours rifled and its beauties defaced. The same endureth man by the burden and oppression of the flesh; which being of one family and system with the oppressed creatures, they harmonise together, and either enjoy themselves together, or aggrieve themselves together, and make together their doleful plaint to God. When men give themselves up to rejoice with the creatures, as is the case with all your Epicurean enjoyers of the creature, your tasteful and imaginative beholders of it, your avaricious hoarders of it, and all manner of bondsmen to it, the darkness is generated within them in frightful abundance, until the light of reason becomes almost absorbed and extinguished. "The light shineth in darkness, but the darkness comprehendeth it not." And when these men are quickened, observe that the life must come before the light cometh; the regeneration of the Holy Ghost preceding our being able to see the kingdom of heaven: which being bestowed by Him who is the Life, man is brought to feel his bondage under the law of sin and death, and to perceive all the creatures bound along with him; and now that he has been taught by the Spirit to groan within himself, his ear can hear the groaning of all the creatures, and lead forth their sorrowful lamentations before the throne of God. And now also his eyes can discern the light which is reflected from

all the creatures, and the goodness which is bound up in them until the time that the Redeemer comes; and now indeed he eateth and he drinketh to the glory of God, and the creature gladly ministereth unto the health and strength of a saint of God; because it is her law and her glory; and there is no distinction of clean or of unclean, of vegetable or animal diet: we enter into the full community of God, and slay and eat; and the creature is honoured, not the sin of the creature supported. And now also man beholdeth the face of the world, and is instructed; he beholdeth its beauty, and applaudeth; its wretchedness, and bemoaneth, yet with hope of a coming redemption. He exerciseth himself with true wisdom in all the works of God, and discovereth everywhere the humiliation of that life, which in its lowliest humility was manifested in Christ. Yea, with such feelings as the saint beholdeth the Divine nature of Christ brought for a while within and under the law of sin and death, (though never overcome by it, yet truly under its soreness, and grievance, and curse,) doth he behold the future glorious nature of the creature suffering under the bondage of the law of sin and death. This he perceiveth everywhere; and perceiving, he is afflicted, but comforted, as I said, with faith and hope of the coming redemption; and thus he mocks not the creature with indiscreet and ill-timed pœans of praise, or unmingled salutations of blessing; but he kindly healeth its fallen condition, and gently comforteth its many wounds, and praiseth the beautiful streaks of life, and promises of eternal life, which everywhere are to be seen beneath the surface by an enlightened observer. But how few thus hallow the creature! Alas, how few of our sentimentalists, like Rousseau; of our poetical wanderers, like Byron; of our philosophical historians, like Schiller; or our selfish sages, like Goethe; or our romancers here at home; how few, if any, man, woman, or child, of that Babel of tongues, who, in prose and verse are making the four corners of Christendom ring with their various tales, ballads, and stories, discern one gleam of the true light, one pulse of the eternal life, one iota of the word of God, which is in all the creatures. Verily, verily, "the light shineth in darkness, but the darkness comprehendeth it not."

The evangelist proceedeth then to explain the office and commission of the Baptist, with respect to this Light, whereof he was but like the morning star, who heralds in the glorious sun by means of a portion of his own light: so did the Baptist, and all the prophets which went before, herald Him; and all received of the fulness of life and light which was in Him. But these verses we pass over, as not so much concerning our present aim; and take up the 9th verse, where the subject is renewed, "He was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." This, though it be true of that light which is in every man, as was above declared, is—I judge from the context, which speaketh of John's coming, and also from the expression, "cometh into the world," which Christ applieth thus, "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again I leave the world, and go to the Father"—to be considered as applicable in its primary sense to "every man," who, like John the Baptist had been sent from God into the world: and it declareth that they all received their light of truth from this true light, of whom John had come to bear testimony; but which he was not, nor any of the prophets; all of them being only a train of lights to shew the world its darkness, until He should come who "is the light of the world:" of whom it is immediately added, "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not." Strange and most striking proof of its blindness, and its darkness, that it should not be able to perceive the light which shone in the midst of it! and this not in some dark and superstitious corner of it, but there, whither almost all these forerunners had been sent, and that very herald of His approach to prepare the way, where the worship of the true God was maintained, and no idol permitted to pollute the land. If any one ask, why was the light covered with veils of flesh, or why was the truth parabolised in emblems: the answer is, because the much converse of men with darkness, and their much delight with the enjoyment and cupidity of the creature, made it even necessary for their own profiting that He should so appear. For if they rejected Him thus in condescension veiled, and in humility clothed, yet great and mighty in word and deed, and only wanting their faith to be greater and

mightier still: surely they could not have received Him, but would have been consumed or overwhelmed with the very vestments, or radiancy, of His glory; as, indeed, was proved in the Mount of Transfiguration, by the most advanced of the worshippers of God. Such is the miserable, such is the irrecoverable blindness of man and all the creatures; such is the obscuration of that light which is in all living things—such their insensibility unto God, and their ignorance of the nature of God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, in all who have not been quickened by the Holy Spirit, and enabled to discern their bondage, and to wait for their deliverance. It is said further, "He came unto his own, but his own received him not:" that is, not to the world in general, of whose ignorance He had already spoken, but unto His own people, the people whom He had chosen for an inheritance;' "His own," whom He had separated to Himself for a peculiar treasure, and entreated with a parent's care; but they received him not, but rejected Him as the Son of God, and the true Light of the world, and with wicked hands did crucify and slay Him. But, to those who received Him,—that is, to those who, like Anna the prophetess, were feeling and lamenting their oppression, and waiting for the consolation of Israel,—"He gave power to become the sons of God." And here again we are brought back to our leading doctrine, from which we have diverged into this exposition, in order to confirm it; namely, That there is a *receiving* of Him, that there is a soil into which to receive the seed of His word. There were such among the Jews, and there were such among the Gentiles, who were waiting for Him, and received Him so soon as He was made known unto them. And these were such as were using to the best advantage the light which was in them for the life which they enjoyed, aided by the tidings which God had left concerning Himself everywhere, but which He preserved especially in the high places of Zion. The men who everywhere were striving by these means to wrestle with the bondage of the natural man, and his lustful and intemperate affections towards the creatures, who were seeking to use the creatures temperately, and to see in them the light which was in them, and to glorify God; these men were able to

receive him, and did receive Him and His messengers, clearly seeing the light after which they had been groping, in that bright light which was presented unto them. They believed the testimony because they felt its truth. Miracles did not compel their reason against itself to comply. Their reason saw herself, and all her desires brought to her enjoyment: the thing she longed for was at length come. And thus, with God's various helps and ministries was the truth received in the world;—a great mystery indeed of godliness, "that God should be believed on in the world:" of which mystery I have been shewing you a little of the depth in this lecture. Hence it is, that when our Lord sent forth the seventy, He said unto them, "Into whatsoever city ye enter, inquire who are worthy, and there abide till ye go thence." And so Peter, when commissioned to the Gentiles, was sent unto Cornelius, a devout worshipper of God: and so was Philip, unto the Eunuch amongst the sons of Ham, and so was Paul unto Lydia, who was we may suppose of the daughters of Japhet; and so I make no doubt it will be found universally that the gospel of the salvation of Christ is received by those who have been wisely beholding nature's light in and around them, and worthily partaking of nature's bounty. To such gave He power to become the sons of God, quickening them by the power of the quickening Spirit which He hath, which indeed He is; as heretofore He had breathed into the living soul of reason, when He gave them of that life which was in Him; so now of that resurrection from death which was in Him, He giveth the power He recovered, to arise from the dead. Fulfilling the law of God, "Unto him that hath shall be given, and he shall have more abundantly; and from him that hath not shall be taken even that he hath;"—and that other, "He that is faithful over the least is faithful over the greatest: and if ye have not been faithful over the mammon of unrighteousness, who will give unto you the true riches?"

Thus have we endeavoured to set forth in order, and to justify from Scripture, the doctrine that there are natural means, under the Divine blessing, and according to the Divine

appointment, to work together towards the creation of that good soil of an honest heart, in which the seed of the word will take root, and bring forth fruit in much abundance, to the honour and glory of God. And, throughout the whole argument, we can with a safe conscience affirm, that we have sought simply to interpret the words of our Lord, taking for our guide therein the great lineaments of revelation, and the great principles of natural reason. And we might now conclude the subject, but that we are anxious to guard you against certain misconstructions to which the doctrine is exceedingly liable, and to which we foresee it may easily be wrested. And this we shall now do after having briefly set before you the sum and substance of the doctrine itself.

II.—THE JUSTIFICATION OF THE DOCTRINE.

We have maintained from the whole parable, but especially from this last part of it, that there is in men, as they are found in all ages, and in all countries, some who are prepared, and some who are unprepared, by the state of their hearts and minds, for receiving the seed of everlasting truth, which Christ, first by Himself, and now by His Church, is sowing in the world, and which the Holy Spirit is continually watering; that this difference is due to their wise or their unwise, their honest or their dishonest, use of those principles of reason which God hath created in them, and of those opportunities of exercising them which He hath put within their power. But when our creation, gifts, or talents, and these occasions of providence, have been improved to the utmost, they can go no further than to prepare a soil for bearing divine fruit; but which in itself is utterly incapable of bringing forth anything pertaining to the redemption; and whether God shall sow any divine seed in it at all, is wholly according to the good pleasure of His own will. Such a soil I believe to exist, wherever man exists; and upon this faith I would go and preach the gospel to every nation under heaven, and sow in hope: yet God in His providence hath not ordered it so that there should be preachers of His gospel in every place. Because God will exercise His own sovereign pleasure in bestowing His gifts: and "those not having the law, are a law unto themselves, and

will be judged without law." Thus far the power of man can go, and no further: and here he must hope and expect. And even in Christian countries, which possess both the written and the preached word, with all the other ordinances of the Church, man can go no further by all his wisdom and power, than to prepare the soil. And thus we draw a broad impassable gulf around the realm and region of human power. In order to produce one act, which may be called good in the language of the gospel, the power of God must be put forth; every good work is a fruit of redemption. It is not within the region of natural life, but beyond an insuperable and impassable barrier, which nothing but almighty power prevaileth to pass over. The first grain of wheat which was fit for the garner of heaven was Christ; that sprung up from death and the grave, and it carried many along with it, of which no one without it would ever have flourished again, and the same almighty power which was required to quicken Christ, the first-fruits, is required to quicken all the rest. If there were one good work capable of being produced by all the efforts of natural reason, then would Christ have died in vain. It is of the utmost necessity that this be understood: for it is the corner-stone of the whole system of revealed truth. Now, my subject did not call me to go a step beyond this: but if it had, I would have taken up the parable of the Vine, and shewn from thence the work of God whereby fruits are ripened;—how that the Father is the Husbandman, or Vine-dresser, Christ the Vine, and believers the branches; that is to say, the Father plants the seed, which is Christ, and raises it up to stature, out of which, when branches grow, He prunes them, and dresses them, and doth to them whatever seemeth good in His sight. And, to complete the figure, I would add, that the Holy Spirit which sustained Christ, doth sustain all the branches in union with Him, doth take them out of their natural wild stock, and graft them on this good stock; and thus the Father, by the generation of the word, and the procession of the Holy Ghost, doth work the work of bringing forth fruits unto the glory of God. Such is the doctrine which we have taught: and all our discourse hath bent itself to shew you how you might best use the faculties of your reason, the advantages of your condition,

and the means of grace, for preparing that good soil which may thus be made productive by the combined power of the three persons of the Godhead.

Now, upon considering in what way this important doctrine is liable to misapprehension of well-disposed, and misrepresentation of ill-disposed men, the two following arise before my mind: the one, coming in the form of an objection, is, And how then is it that we see the most reprobate and ill-conditioned men oft seized upon by the grace of God, and made to be abundant in the fruits of holiness; while, at the same time, we behold the children of the most pious and best educated families, wholly departing from the ways of godliness? To this I reply, by stating the doctrine over again; which is, not that the soil can produce fruit of itself, but only if it should please God to sow His word in it. This is a sufficient reply to that part of the objection which respects the children of pious parents; of whom I will say, however, that out of these the Church is commonly gathered, though not exclusively; for this were to make the sons of God hereditary, which they never were, and never will be. Though the promises of God unto the children and the children's children of His people, be sufficiently abundant to encourage the heart of every parent to travail diligently in rearing them up in His nurture and admonition, and though without any promise, it be the bounden duty of every parent under the sacrament of baptism so to do; yet God doth never, no, nor never can, by His promises bring Himself under what we call a necessity to carry Himself so and so to any man. The promise is a general expression of God's will, and every instance in which the promise is fulfilled, is an expression of the same free-will; which the promise doth not hamper in the least, so that it should not be free to God to do according to the promise, or not according to it, as seemeth to Him good. It is sufficient for the fulfilment of a promise, that His providence should proceed according to that method: but in every instance of its application, there is an exercise of sovereign, free, and unbiassed will. God is never brought under an obligation, so as to take out of the way, and supersede, the exercise of His free grace. We can never rest upon

a promise, a claim of right, otherwise grace were dethroned and overthrown. Besides, God can never make a promise to any spirit, so as to preclude the responsibility of another spirit. To our own God we all do stand and fall for ourselves, whatever our fathers may have been. And, therefore, though the children are no doubt visited for their fathers' sake, they are not by such visitation displaced from their own relation unto God, from the standing of every creature towards God; which standing is, that he cannot be saved otherwise than by free grace,—that is, by the acknowledgment of God's will as the only law, and the only blessedness, and the only security of every creature. For every one must, before he can be saved, be brought to the condition of acknowledging the rebellion and infirmity of his own will, and committing himself wholly over to the will of God, and desiring to stand in the great Head of all things, His Son, Christ Jesus, who both taught us the will of God for our salvation, and gave us the example of the most perfect obedience and conformity thereto. And if so be that every man, in order to be redeemed, must thus resign all pleas of right, and resources of self, then is it manifest that no one will plead the right of a promise or of a covenant, though he may humbly expect the grace of it; nor accuse God of unfaithfulness, because He hath not seen it good to pour the burden of it unto his lap. For this is a direct act of discontent and dissatisfaction, and doth indicate the very opposite state of spirit to that of humility and salvation. It is a turning of God's goodness and grace against Himself, and seeking to wrest His good promises to the purpose of enslaving His will to the good pleasure of our own will.

Besides, who is the parent that can plead the perfect fulfilment of his baptismal obligation; who can say, that since the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost was named over my child, I have renounced sin, cut him off in the flesh, sacrificed my Isaac, my child of laughter, and looked upon him as a Nazarite separated unto God, loved him only with a spiritual love, and rejoiced over him only with a holy joy, ruled him only with a heavenly rule and government, and administered God's heritage for God's glory, but never at any time for my own profit or pleasure? Now, if we have offended

in one point, we have offended in all; and how then should we be able to set up a claim of right, or be disappointed if God should not fulfil a covenant which we have violated in every act, and attempt to fulfil it? But if we, being in the covenant, do hope with a continual hope, resting upon the blood of the covenant, and desire with a continual resignation to the Divine will, and receive with a continual admiration of the Divine forgiveness to such covenant-breakers;—thus for ourselves and for our children, hope, desire, and receive; shall we have any such disappointments and upbraidings of God as the objection implieth? We will never dream of our children being otherwise placed to God than we ourselves are: we will hope from God's grace a continuance to them of their fathers' privileges, and even this we will expect with a full sense of their fathers' misuse of them; but we will never expect that they are to be delivered from their fathers' battles, which they must fight for themselves, because no man can redeem his brother or his child from death. And if the sons must enter to the wrestlings of their fathers, then must they stand or fall according to their faith and their faithfulness, according to their denial of their own will, and only exaltation of the will of God. How, then, should we be surprised that many of them fall before the tempter and the seducer, when we see the same taking place amongst their fathers in the Church every day of our life? We will rather be surprised that the Lord doth not visit all our sins upon the head of our children, and upon our own head, and admire His long-suffering, which continueth His candlestick in its place to us and to them. But as to the arrogancy of making a demand upon God, and, as it were, drawing an obligation upon Him which He must answer in due time, it is utterly abominable, and in direct variance with the whole spirit of the gospel, which is free grace and sovereign will and pleasure, in every promise which is given in the word, and in every instance wherein that promise is fulfilled by providence.

Nevertheless, if it be doubted by any whether the promise of God to bless the children and the children's children of those that keep His covenant, be true and faithful, or not, I stand forth and say, that it is most true and faithful; and

may most surely be relied on by every parent, and pleaded by every child of pious parents, though in both cases not in the spirit of right, but of simple reference to the good pleasure of God. And I am ready to maintain, that in my observation of Divine providence, nothing hath been so much shewn forth, as the blessing which descendeth upon the families of the pious, and the curse which descendeth upon the families of the impious. And especially have I observed this in those extreme cases of the martyrs upon the one hand, and the murderers of the martyrs upon the other. Insomuch that, if I were called upon to enter into particulars, I could go through almost every family of the saints, and every family of the persecutors of the saints of our mother Church, and shew how, through long generations, they have been most diversely entreated by the righteous providence of God. So that there is nothing more spurious and hateful than the notion of our sectarians, that we are not to look for a retribution in this life; whereas the truth is, that God's dealings with men and families, yea, and kingdoms in this world, are the very manifestation of that future retribution which awaits the evil and the good in another world, and likewise the fulfilment of His purpose, and the accomplishment of His promises to this day. And after long withdrawals of His countenance, will God return again to have mercy upon a family or a Church which in times past hath testified boldly for His truth. And when He has a work of grace to work unto that land, He will make the first overtures of occupation therein to the children of those who served Him heretofore. And haply, if He have a work of chastisement, and scourging, and judgment, He will do the same by the children of those who heretofore were His hammer and His axe. Witness how, after a long century of deadness, He hath returned unto the Church of England with a revival which they will not acknowledge to His glory; and so, I fear it will end in a visitation of wrath. Witness how He blesseth the children of the Scottish Church with prosperity and honour, wherever they go in the first generation; which, alas! they do seldom improve to His glory and the honour of His Church, whence it cometh to pass in the next generation that they fall short, and do often give themselves up to wickedness. And

from God's faithfulness, I have a good hope that He will turn unto our Church with mercy, because of the sufferings of our fathers; although, I lament to say, there be as yet but faint signs of any light or enlargement.

With respect to the other part of this objection, that the word of God doth often take root in the hearts of the most reprobate and wicked men, when to all human observation there is no appearance of any soil having been prepared, but the very reverse; I answer, *generally*, that the Lord is always larger than His promises, which, though they be exceeding broad, and most faithful all, do not yet comprehend the grace of God, which is far larger than words can express. God is fuller than His word: Christ Jesus alone comprehendeth His fulness. He could make as many promises more as He hath made, and be as far from being exhausted as ever. He is a rule unto Himself, and His word is merely prophetic of the course that His will is to pursue: given not for His own limitation, but for our belief and expectation. And when we believe and expect that His providence will proceed, and His Spirit operate, as He hath written, we are not therefore to infer that they must restrict themselves within that boundary. How many instances of such an unaccountable providence is there in the records of God's mighty acts! Though He honours primogeniture, He took Abel and not Cain for His first martyr. Again, He loved Jacob and hated Esau; He preferred Ephraim to Manasseh. Though He honours chastity and purity, how often did He cross the line of Messiah's descent by irregular and illicit generation, in the case of Tamar, of the harlot Rahab, of Bathsheba, and others. In the case of David, the youngest and least stately of Jesse's sons was preferred: and so forth, in innumerable instances. Now, what meaneth this? It meaneth the greatest wisdom and goodness; by manifesting the continual presence of a WILL which gives no account of itself. Not that every promise is not a free act of unconditional will, but that man is so accustomed to the operation of cause and effect in the material world, that he is continually forgetting the operation of the Divine will in everything spiritual; supposing the promise to

be the cause of the thing promised, and so to bring the will of God under conditions; which is the most monstrous and fatal of all errors. To guard against this propensity of the fallen intellect of man, is the reason why God in so many instances traverseth the order of His own ordinary procedure, by making His will manifest, ever and anon, in the midst of the orderly succession of events. This is for the weakness of the creature's fallen reason, to startle him, and to rouse him to give heed and consider; otherwise, in the absence of these arbitrary acts, rest ye assured, that a dead formality would mould everything into the regularity of a mechanism, a moral mechanism. But when the creature's reason, from being under the law of nature is brought into the liberty or under the law of the Spirit, (the royal law of liberty,) then it needs not such instances, but comes to perceive that everything is of the Divine will, as well the promise as the acts of its fulfilment. That the promise is only a help to faith towards the bringing of our will into harmony with the will of God, which we come to recognise as the only ground of well-being, as, indeed, the only principle of being. And for a sign to the unbelieving world, and a guard against the Arminian tendency of the Church, God is graciously pleased to manifest His will by the conversion of the most wicked and abandoned of men, and their exceedingly high advancement in the Christian life. And the good which is thereby done is by nothing more manifested than by the way in which such an event is talked of in the world, and the surprise which it occasions even amongst believers. But in truth, to an enlightened saint every operation of the Divine Spirit in his soul is as wonderful as the conviction of a Saul: being as great a demonstration of the almighty grace of God. And the existence of an election according to grace at all, is the wonder of wonders; and entitles the Redeemer to the constant appellation of "THE WONDERFUL." But so great is our imperfection in holiness, so wilful our desire to see all things under the natural law of cause and effect, and so perverse our dislike to discern an absolute will, that it is really an unspeakable grace in God to continue a succession of these acts which fight against all order, and can be accounted for on no principle. They are a

continual suggesting of the universal truth, "that He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth." They are a continual ground for the Calvinist to argue out that thesis of theses, "that God hath mercy upon whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth." Not as if they were necessary to Him who understandeth aright of God; but to them who understand amiss they are continual demonstrations of their ignorance, and warnings of their dangerous error; and they never can be spared from the present imperfect condition of the Church.

So much I answer, in general, concerning those cases of conversion which are looked upon as exceptions to the rule before us, because the seed seemeth to take root there without any previously prepared soil; but if I were to come to particulars, I could perhaps a little take off the edge of men's surprise, and shew that they were not so much beyond the rule as at first sight they seem to be. For you will generally find, that those open rakes, and professed reprobates, to whom the word of the gospel comes with its mightiest power, are of "an honest heart," and a plain simple character; infected with few artifices, and corrupted by few hypocrisies; of a single eye towards that which they are in quest of, and neither given to falsehood nor to deception. Which very honesty of nature it is that generally makes them so conspicious in their wickedness as that they will not conceal nor counterfeit, but plainly appear to all men in their true character. They are offended with the dissimulations which more prudent men find it easy to adopt. They can neither bear to be duped themselves, nor will they dupe others. This, I say, is an honest man: he is a wicked man, but he is honest in his wickedness. He is yielding to his passions, but he is not all the while walking in a lie, and feeding his heart with the barrenness of hypocrisy. Of the wicked men in the world, these strongly expressed, boldly uttered, and universally observed characters, are precisely the only honest men in their wickedness; the rest are wicked, and knaves withal. See ye not, then, that if God, purposing to plant some seed in that field, do commonly take such, it is not a departure from, but an observation of, the rule of "a good and honest heart." Shew me a dissembler, a politician, a

knave, a very courteous, safe, and (as they abuse the word) prudent man, who is walking in the ways of wickedness, converted to the Lord, and I will say that such a conversion is an exception to the rule. But there are exceeding few of these cowardly sinners ever brought to the way of truth. Shew me, again, a vain ostentatious sinner, who is proud of his vices, and boasteth himself in them, and courts observation by their excess, brought to the knowledge of the truth, and I will call that likewise an exception to the parable. Or, shew me a proud man, who plants his foot upon the firm rock of his right and independency to do his pleasure, and boldly shews the face and front of his offending, and dares the world to challenge or to hinder him, and that also I will hold to be an exception. But when you produce to me the plain-spoken, frank, and open-hearted, honest man, who gives a loose to his inclinations, and lets nature express without disguise or hindrance her various evil moods and propensities; such an one as John Newton was in the lusts of the flesh, and Scott in the pride of the intellect, such as are the most numerous instances of conversion daily taking place in our army, but especially in our navy; you do not bring an exception, but a confirmation to the parable: for they are precisely of that class of wicked men who may be described as being of "an honest and good heart."

Understand me not as for a moment palliating the wickedness of such men, while I uphold at all hands the value of honesty, and maintain, that an honest man is much nearer to the kingdom of heaven than is a dishonest man, their other circumstances being the same; that of all things which remove one from the neighbourhood of God, dishonesty in ourselves, and doubt of another's honesty, are the most baneful. Hypocrisy and scepticism are the most soul-scourging, and God-alienating of sins. And hence it was that the Lord could make no way whatever with the Pharisees and the Sadducees, while with the publicans and sinners He had much better success. For the Pharisees and scribes were mostly hypocrites, and the Sadducees were sceptics. This also is the reason why you can make so little way for truth with the religious world, because they have moulded

religion into a fashion, and made us half-regulars. Now, a fashion is made up, nine-tenths of dissimulation for the sake of appearances, and the other tenth of vanity and folly: and of all fashions, a fashion in religion is the worst, being like the sin of sacrilege. I take it, the modern Pharisee lurks under the sanctimoniousness of this religious world. And for the Sadducees, they are not to be mistaken, being our lettered and scientific men of almost every name, who handle the pen, and make their bread by letter craft; with the multitude who delight themselves in the nakedness and barrenness of that field. The former will give the mint and cumin of spiritual righteousness, but the weightier matters of the truth they will not hear: the latter will give heed to nothing beyond what their eyes can see, their experience realise, or their instinct of advantage feel.

Where, then, are we to find the soil of honesty on which the seed of the Divine word will take root? Among those, all wicked and ignorant though they be, who are honest in setting forth their character, and believe others to be actuated by the like honesty: who are not taken up with judging and classifying men, applying tests to them, or weighing their spiritual conditions in the balances of this or that religious guild; but growing up under the good and wholesome restraints of education, in a true-hearted brotherly love to men around them, and a veneration of the ordinances of God;—the honest people of the land, who love justice, and will see right done to the meanest; and even in their roughest combats will insist for fair play. While this regard for honesty and justice lives in the body of the people, and while there is in the Church an honest fearless ministry of the truth to inform and direct it, I have a good hope of the prosperity of the nation. But, ah me! how this bulwark of our land is falling before its thousand enemies! I could sit me down and weep amidst the ruins of our ancient national honesty. If I look to our merchants, whose bare name was wont to be guarantee of their honour all the world over; I witness the most headlong race after gain, and the wildest speculation after profit. If I look to our tradesmen, I behold the same restlessness to be rich: the old ambition of keeping one's credit, and bringing up his

family in decency and honesty, and having wherewithal to set them afloat in life, satisfieth hardly any one of our tradesmen; who hasten to be rich, are ambitious of a gentleman's condition, and eager to realise an estate; which pride of life prompts all that violent pushing of trade, and brings on most of those frequent defalcations whereof all complain; but, worst of all, it eats out the soil of honest industry and good principle. If I look to our common people, I behold multitudes of them fallen from their ancient honest independency to the condition of paupers, out of the desire of getting whatever they can; an evil which hath been promoted, no doubt, by much selfishness towards them from the higher orders. When to this I add the faculty of reading which the people have acquired, and the kind of food presented to them; of which I should say ninety-nine parts in a hundred are newspapers and magazines, containing in general the most expressed essence of malignity and ridicule. Finally, if I look to all ranks, and consider the spirit of levity, ridicule, and criticism, which hath possessed us; the depreciation of the qualities of the heart, such as patriotism, disinterestedness, self-denial, and other forms of honesty; and the admiration of the qualities of the intellect, such as wit, argument, declamation, sarcasm, and satire; whoso that believeth the doctrine of this discourse, and will give due weight to these things, shall easily perceive how the field of this community will soon eject the seed of God's holy law which was sown in it by our fathers, and how the religion which is produced in its present thinness of soil can be of no better a sort than we now behold it to be. And here is the cause of the increase of crime;—this relaxation of religious restraints over the body of the people; this weakening of those obligations which bound every man to every other man, and wove both strong and beautiful the web of life.

It is true, I occupy the painful distinction of being almost a solitary prophet of evil, and am liable to all manner of obloquy for the same; yet, while God keeps me in this post of bearing testimony in the ear of this metropolitan city, I may not flinch from declaring that over all ranks there is fast hasting a fearful apostasy from the truth of the gospel, and a fatal breaking up of the bulwarks of social life. Society is already loose, and

will soon be disorganised; religion is already methodical, and will soon be apostate: and the only hope of the land is the pulpit, where there is still a post worthy the maintaining. Over the press they have imposed the censorship of criticism, whereby they can debar from the great body of the people whatever their malice or their self-interest may please them to debar. And, alas! the pulpit is become such a mere echo of truth, instead of being the full-toned voice of truth, there is so little breadth and substance in its lessons, it applies itself so seldom to the conditions of men, and hath so forsworn all intermeddling with the social and political interests of the community, under the name of political preaching, that I have foregone much hope of better days from this quarter also. They will keep up their little sects and increase their petty rivalries, work the machinery of their various societies, and cry out, All's well, all's well! whereas the whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint, and the noble stock of Britain is ready to die. But if preaching would assume its oracular voice again, Thus saith the Lord, and give forth its responses of wisdom, "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness," it would begin to act upon the soil, and produce those under-crops of duty and worth which might bring us up again to the point of bearing fruits meet for repentance and everlasting life.

It was this honest, manly character of our fathers, this devotion to truth, when they saw it, that made the seed of the Reformation take such root, and keep its hold amongst us; when in Spain and Portugal, in Italy and France, and the Netherlands, the persecutions which arose on account of the word prevailed like the scorching sun to destroy it, because it had there no depth of soil to grow upon. For these are but heady, hasty people, compared with the honest, hearty character of these islanders; which also is a grace that God hath given to us to be used to His glory. And behold how the cloudy German, and the phlegmatic Hollander, and the bold Scandinavian, and the hardy Switzers, who held fast the seed of the Reformation against the scorching sun, have yielded it at length, and suffered it to be choked with the cares of this world, and the wild weeds of the human understanding; but

we, by God's grace, do still possess a remnant of the Reformation spirit, and have experienced the revival of a much inferior evangelical spirit, which I long hoped against hope to see perfected into the apostolical spirit, but now with sad resignation behold drooping down and sinking into the earth again, a temporary and an ineffectual shoot. Thus every pulse of life beats lower and lower, every throb waxes fainter and fainter. The Apostolical, the Reformed, the Nonconformist, this Methodistical, have succeeded each other like the gold, and silver, and brass, and iron ages of Christianity. Depend upon it, there will be no fifth. Ours is to gather together the crew, and warn them of a shipwreck, to undergird the ship, and keep her afloat for a while, in hopes of reaching some shore, to betake ourselves to pieces of the wreck, and save what we can from the watery waste. The apostles warned the Church that Satan had already taken the field against them, and that the mystery of iniquity did already work: the Reformers saw the radical spirit, and warned the Church against the Anabaptist anti-social opinions with which Satan was seeking to embroil their work; and taught that evil days were approaching to try them in the furnace: Luther went so far as to say that, when he and Melancthon, and some few other lights were gone, the Church would become worse than before; and he thought the patience of the Lord could not last longer than three hundred years from his time, when he judged that Christ would come in judgment upon the world. And our Scottish Reformers, with their immediate successors, were so full of the same spirit of prophecy that they would spend whole nights in prayer and watching, on account of the perilous times which they saw about to come. But now, see you, there is nothing but hallelujahs and congratulations, as if indeed the night were past, and the bright day arisen, as if Satan were bound, and the Lord were reigning. They do not even suspect that Satan is busy counterworking them: with the irreligious world they think he is wholly taken up; but into the religious world they have not a suspicion that he dare venture. Dare venture, thou fool! why, the world is all his own by right, until the Lord come: his ventures and his adventures are all against the

Church. He always aims at the noblest game: to destroy Christ's life on earth is all his rage; to counterwork the Holy Spirit, to anticipate and counterfeit Him, to overtake and supplant Him, to leaven His work of revelation with his own mystery of iniquity, to plant tares in the midst of the wheat which Christ hath planted; these things are his industry, his high calling and noble office, in pursuit of which he goeth about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. But of any such artifices of Satan, they have lost even the idea in these days of light: indeed, it would seem a matter of doubt, from the way they speak and laugh, and still more from the unguarded, open quarters which they keep, whether they believe in Satan's existence or not. Certainly they believe themselves to be much removed beyond the power of his malignity and cunning.

Verily, verily, the soil is growing thinner and thinner amongst us of the Reformed Churches; the spirit of scepticism is destroying the very capacity of faith: the demonstrations of the intellect, which hold of sight, are destroying the revelations of the word of God, which hold of faith: even our divines, our most famous divines, will boldly aver, that they will believe nothing of which they cannot form a clear conception; which means they will believe nothing at all; for when a thing is conceived by the understanding, it is under the category of sight or sense, and is no longer under the category of faith;—insomuch that if we continue at this pace to untwist the triple cord of faith, hope, and charity, I can see, without the help of any prediction, how the Lord must be constrained, if He will keep a Church upon the earth, to go elsewhere for a soil; either to bring in some unlettered barbarians, as He heretofore did when the Roman empire would no longer yield Him increase, or, which we believe upon the word of all the prophets since the world began, return in His mercy to His ancient people, according to the spirit of all the prophecies. But these things will more properly fall to be considered under the second objection, to which we are now come: but before entering upon it we draw the following practical conclusion from what hath been said, in refutation of this objection:—

That in all our endeavours to create a soil in our own heart, or in the hearts of our children, and in doing our part to keep

up and repair the soil of the community, we ought ever to bear in mind that we are acting, not meritoriously for the deserving of some spiritual gift, but humbly in the hope of a promised grace, and dutifully in order to discharge ourselves of the obligations under which we lie, as well for our natural talents as for our Christian graces. And with respect to the fruits of the divine seed which are to follow, while we labour in good hope and cheerfully, we ought wholly to leave the work of the new birth and the new life unto God; never for a moment imagining that we can bring any help, or have any claim thereto. It is such an offence against God's sovereign majesty, not to honour the good pleasure of His will in all things, thereon meekly to depend, thereto gently to be resigned, that when this is not present, all laborious duties, all diligent performances, do go for nothing; being in truth not done unto the glory of God's sovereignty, but done unto the honour of our own deserving, and, as it were, to bring God under an obligation, and bind Him to a necessity of prospering that in which we have spent so much time and pains. The first lesson, therefore, that you ought to teach your children is, that, do what you can, do what they can, their salvation is wholly of the will of God, who will not surrender one iota of His honour unto any creature; and that you do so teach and discipline them, not out of your own judgment, but out of a reverence to that very will, and obedience of those laws of His will, which He hath prescribed unto the children of men. This, as I have taught, is the very end and meaning of all established relationships of parent and child, husband and wife, master and servant, king and subject, that the superior may rule, and the inferior may obey, according to the laws of God, and both be thereby trained to the honour and the obedience of the will of the Divine Majesty. Flinch not to declare unto all men, but especially unto your children, that it is of God that willeth, not of man that worketh, that all good things proceed.

That above all things we should cultivate honesty and simplicity, truth and faithfulness, in ourselves and all with whom we have to do. Falsehood, fraud, and subterfuge permit at no rate: be jealous of wit and humour, and all equivocal

forms of representing things. I have sometimes devoutly wished that I were so stupid as not to understand a joke, that I were honest enough to perceive nothing but the falsehood of what the French call a *jeu d'esprit* or playfulness of mind. I tell you, brethren, be honest in your dealings: take no advantage even of a child. Be conscientious in your bargains. Have a single eye, and a single heart. Seek not to be shrewd. Be not ashamed to be called simple. And let me tell you a secret, which ought not to be a secret, seeing it is written in the Scriptures, that your whole body will then be full of light; and this in every kind: you will actually see further, and see clearer than shrewd and cunning men, and you will be less liable to be duped than they, provided you add to this another part of character which is proper to an honest man—namely, a resolution to protect honesty, and to discountenance every kind of fraud. A cunning man is never a firm man; but an honest man is: a double-minded man is always unstable; a man of faith is firm as a rock. I tell you there is a sacred connexion between honesty and faith: honesty is faith applied to worldly things, and faith is honesty quickened by the Spirit to the use of heavenly things. In all that I have said upon this quality, I have not said enough of it. I have but given the clue to the proper way of discoursing upon it; but I cannot be said to have discoursed of it. Perhaps I may, if God strengthen me, make some further reference to it, under the head of application, "Take heed how you hear." Meanwhile, let me press it upon you in the words of our old ballad, "'Tis guid to be honest and true."

And that wherever we find an honest-hearted man, however sunk he may be in wickedness, we should have hope, and there drop the seed of the word of God: and this may be extended to missionaries, wherever they can find an honest-minded people, however stupid and uncivilised, thither let them go and preach the gospel with good hope. But as to all manner of political and double-minded people, wise in their own conceit, and prudent for this world, clever, intellectual, and active-minded though they be; have more hope of a fool than of such a one. They are too knowing to believe;

they are too shrewd to be charitable, they are too prudent to hope against hope: you may as soon expect corn to grow upon the sea-beach, as the seed of the word to take root there. Be on your guard, then, and remember you have been warned against these forms of character to which this age is so very prone. You cannot be of this character, and be after God's image: the thing is utterly impossible. Therefore, choose after which you will be conformed; the wisdom from above, which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and of good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy, or after the wisdom that descendeth not from above, which is earthly, sensual, devilish.

And now I come to the second objection which is made to this our doctrine; namely, If this doctrine be true, that a soil is necessary in order that the word of God may take root in it; and that to the formation of this prerequisite soil, such and such operations as you have stated above are necessary; then do you postpone the preaching of the gospel to the work of civilising the nations; and place a barrier in the way of the apostolical commission, "Go ye unto all nations, and teach them, baptizing them in the the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost." I answer, that I postpone the preaching of the gospel to nothing, but believe most surely that it is to be preferred before everything; because it is the best gift of God unto a fallen world, and by no means to be hidden from any nation, or any part of any nation; but, like a light, is to be placed upon a candlestick, that it may give light to all that are in the house. And this is the very similitude used by our Lord, in the conclusion of the parable; for this very end, as I take it, of guarding the doctrine of the parable from this abuse. "No man, when he hath lighted a candle, covereth it with a vessel, or putteth it under a bed; but setteth it on a candlestick, that they which enter in may see the light. For nothing is secret that shall not be made manifest; neither anything hid that shall not be known, and come abroad." The candle here is the enlightened minister, as the candlestick is the Church, in which, and from which, he shineth around. And the end of enlightening all such, is to make manifest that

which is secret, and to make known and drag into light that which is hid. There can be no doubt, therefore, that it is the duty not only of every minister, but also of every member of Christ, to shew forth the glorious gospel of Christ for our salvation, in every place, and to every man, and to every class of men; aye and until they shall have shewn themselves all unworthy of it, by trampling it under foot, and turning again and rending him; and now it becomes his duty to desist, both in respect for the worth and dignity of the heavenly gift, and in charitable pity of those who are aggravating their own case by their contempt and dishonour of God's unspeakable gift. With respect to this duty, there can be no doubt that it is paramount, and by no notions of expediency or usefulness to be set aside. To preach the gospel in season and out of season, is our vocation; to obey the gospel, and follow Christ through good report and through bad report, is your vocation: and anything which contraveneth this in the above statement of doctrine, I am willing to renounce.

But it is not surely to contravene that doctrine for one to say, that the preached gospel will not take effect in every case, but only in those which are prepared for it. That it hath not taken effect in every case, is abundantly manifest from the experience of all the world for these eighteen hundred years: that it was not intended to take effect in every case, is manifest from the whole tenor of the gospel parables, from Christ's direct assertions, and from the whole drift of the New Testament. "Many are called, but few chosen." "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." And, even in the Church, both Christ and His apostles testified of an apostasy that would arise, and of a reprobacy that would always be intermingled with the election. So that when He came, it should be questionable whether He should find faith on the earth. If, then, it was foreseen by Christ, and taught, that the gospel should not take effect upon all men and nations, but be a witness against them, until upon the eve of their rejecting it entirely, He should come in swift judgment upon them who know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; what contradiction is there, or rather what agreement is there not

to this, in our saying, that those upon whom it taketh effect are of this description, and those upon whom it doth not are of that other description. Not to have permitted us to declare so, would have been to leave the hearers wholly at sea, and to prevent the preacher from intermeddling with the previous question of our education, and with the contemporaneous question of our walk and conversation; it would have been completely to dissolve connexion between nature and religion, and to separate quite asunder the region of human reason in its fallen condition, from the region of human reason in its regenerate condition,—the region of God's providence from the region of His grace; which I hold to be parts of the same great redemption which we have by Jesus Christ. But, without entering over again into this matter, of the oneness of the whole constitution which hath been established on the earth since the Fall, I return to say, that in the full explanation of that prerequisite soil which will bear the seed, there can be no inconsistency with the assertion of the full liberty of preaching to all nations, and kindreds, and tongues upon the earth.

There would, indeed, be an inconsistency between these two things, if the preaching of the gospel had been invested by our great Prophet with the power of converting all; then, indeed, to have said that this kind only could be converted by it would have been the most violent and wicked contradiction of the glory of the gospel. But seeing it is never so written in the Gospels of our Lord, or the writings of His disciples, and hath never been so believed in the Christian Church until these pitiful days of ignorance and folly; I do count it the greatest charity unto men, and the best obedience of my Lord's good precept and example upon this subject, to define and over again to repeat, and often to reiterate, the character and description of men upon whom the seed of the word falling, may be expected to bear plentiful fruit. For, do we not owe a duty, and that a most imperative one, to the hearer also? Are the shoulders of us preachers to bear the whole load of a rejected gospel? Nay, but our Lord understood the matter better, when He uttered this parable, and closed it with these remarkable words: "Take heed, therefore, how ye

hear: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have." What meaneth this solemn warning of every hearer of the gospel, if it be not to warn them that they underlie an awful responsibility in the hearing, as we do in the preaching; that they may lose its blessed gift, if they do not give diligent heed thereto; that there is a rule and method in the bestowing of this best and most blessed gift of God? Which rule and method is thus expressed:—

First, "To him that hath shall be given, and he shall have more abundantly." Hath what? I ask. Not the seed of the word, manifestly; for this is what is to be given: and if not the seed of the word, then not the fruits of the word, which are the new birth and the new life. And if neither the word nor the fruits of the word, then what, I ask, is this which he hath, and according to which is to be measured that which he shall receive? The only possible answer is, that it meaneth the right use of natural reason and natural providence. To him who hath made a good increase of the talents committed to him already, shall be given the most precious gift of the gospel of the death and resurrection of Christ; which is the very doctrine we have enlarged upon above. "And from him that hath not shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have." That is, he shall have no share in the new gift of grace, who hath no return nor increase to shew for the endowments of creation and providence which God hath bestowed upon him: and not only shall he not profit from the preaching of the word, but he shall suffer loss, even the loss of these very endowments of life which he seemeth to have; which he *seemeth* to have, but *actually hath not.* For if he hath corrupted them all to base uses, they are dead in him; he is dead while he liveth; and of those goods of God whereof he is virtually bereaved, he shall be actually bereaved, and stript bare and naked, and consigned to the second and eternal death. This is the burden of the gospel unto him;—to both a witness: to the former, a witness of his being accepted in the Beloved; to the latter, of his being condemned in the Beloved. And if this be the rule applicable to the hearer, is it not well that it should be noised abroad? Doth it take away

the liberty of preaching, to add this other note unto its far ranging compass? Surely it doth enlarge it so much the more.

If, then, there be rule and method in the gift, an act of discrimination and of judgment in the Giver, it is very manifest that wherever the gospel is preached, it is preached for a witness of God, and a test of mankind. It witnesseth God's grace unto the fallen, and His infinite love in bestowing His only-begotten Son to redeem the sinner: and it searcheth and trieth men to discover every one amongst them who hath been honouring and who hath been dishonouring God with His reasonable soul; to the former, bringing the great reward of grace in the gospel, and advancing him to be a partaker of the Lord's sufferings in the earth, that he may be a sharer also of the life and immortality which He hath brought to light; to the other, bringing the great judgment of presenting unto him a light, which by his works of darkness he hath disqualified himself to look upon, and so condemning him already, because he loveth the darkness rather than the light which hath come into the world, but which he cannot receive, because the god of this world hath blinded his mind lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto him. To all such the preaching of the gospel is the seal of death; by shewing the most degraded condition into which they have come, of not being able to receive the mercy of God, and how ripe they are, therefore, for His wrath and indignation. God would not come upon the world in judgment until He should first have tried them round and round with His mercy and grace, and proved that there was no other way of dealing with it but by destruction, by the excision of the second death.

There is, therefore, always a previous question: In what state are the people to whom the gospel cometh? and to that previous question we have been giving heed. That the Jews were under a judicial blindness, and could not receive Christ, and had been so from the time of Isaiah the prophet, is manifest from the passage quoted by our Lord in this very parable: "Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing, see not; and hearing, they hear not; neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which

saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: for this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them." Parables were part of the execution of that same judicial sentence. On purpose did God couch and conceal the truth in a mystery, that they might not understand it, that they might not be converted, that they might not be healed. The same do I gather from the first chapter of the Romans, concerning the heathen: "Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness." "For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections." "And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind." These words teach me, that the Gentiles were at that time underlying a judicial sentence of God, which the gospel was never intended to reverse, but contrariwise, to justify and exacerbate: yet, although both Jew and Gentile were underlying such a vindictive sentence of God's judgment,—the former, for their impenitency and hardness of heart; the latter, for their idolatry,—this did not prevent the Lord and His apostles from preaching unto them the gospel of the grace of God; first unto the Jew, and then unto the Gentile; for the end of separating from the reprobate world those who were waiting for the consolation of Israel, and those who were by nature doing the things contained in the law, and therefore were not underlying the sentence of reprobacy which had passed upon the body of both Jew and Gentile; and also for the end of justifying the swift judgment which God was about to bring upon the whole fabric and constitution of the impenitent and stiff-necked Jews, and upon the idolatrous and lustful heathen. The preaching of Jesus and the apostles, I say, proceeded with a perfect understanding, and a divine premonition, that destruction was determined and about to come upon them both; and that the saved of the Lord should be few, and the slain of the Lord should be many. They knew the nature of the field of the world, into which they were casting the seed: the Lord gave this very parable to teach it to them; that they might

not set out without a just reckoning of the cost, and be befooled; that they might not set their hands to the plough, and draw back again; that they might not indulge a vain hope of converting all, but of calling out the election of God, and raising up witnesses in the midst of the universal apostasy.

Exactly in the same spirit, with exactly the same views, would I go forth and preach to the idolatrous heathen nations; to the whole world, which I understand to have been condemned when its prince was condemned at the resurrection of Christ, lying at the mercy of the Father, and about to be judged upon the coming of Christ. And therefore is it, as I understand doctrine, that the Church since that time hath been called an election, and not a congregation; to denote that it is a part, and a small part, for certain wise ends of God, preserved from the whole who are under the condemnation, and passing continually to the execution of death. And he who thinketh to convert the world by preaching, thinketh to gainsay a word, and undo a purpose, of God: while he who thinketh to call out and make manifest the election, till Christ come to execute judgment, and gather again the scattered congregation, thinketh a good thought, which the Lord our God will bless; because it is of His revealed purposes to do so. And this I understand to have been the Apostolical, the Reformation, and the Missionary doctrine, aye and until these last thirty years; when the religious world hath arisen to change all our ideas and convert the world. Therefore, I would go forth as my fathers did; and my first note should be, "Repent and believe the gospel, or ye are all dead men." And every soul that God was pleased to convert, I would call more precious than the ransom of a world: nor would I tax my God for even that single guerdon of my pains, but would exceedingly rejoice to preach His gospel in the ears of reprobates, that His justice and holiness in their destruction might be gloriously revealed; yea, and if no ears of men were willing to receive the joyful sound, and all turned themselves away abhorrent from the word of His grace, I would be right glad to preach in the ear of the lower creation, and of the inanimate creatures, of the waste howling wilderness, and the desert winds which howl there, that redemption which awaiteth them

in the day of the manifestation of the Son of God. I would sanctify by word of prayer and preaching the element of earth and the element of air, if the children of men had become too savage. This is the true doctrine concerning the preaching of the word. It is not to convert all, but to witness against the wickedness of all; and to glorify God's justice in the destruction of all, and His free grace in the salvation of any.

The same course which I would follow towards the heathen nations, I would feel free to observe also among the nations of the Christian apostasy; concerning whom it is written in the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians, that they are underlying a vindictive sentence of as severe, or even of a severer kind than that which lay upon the Jews and the heathen, in the time of the preaching of the Lord and His apostles. "Whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness," (2 Thess. ii. 9-12.). The dealing of God with the apostasy, as shewn forth in this passage, is full of instruction upon this point of preaching the word, into which we now inquire. That Wicked is not revealed to lead the Church astray into utter apostasy till after the word hath been preached unto them, and hath gathered them together as a Church: and then it is that Satan beginneth to address his subtleties to them, as he did heretofore to Eve in paradise, and to bring forward his mazy counterfeits of truth, as he did unto our Lord in the wilderness. The preaching of the word, and the ordering of the Church, never faileth to set Satan's spite on edge, and to increase the diligence of his unwearied labour to destroy. And this his most diligent and artful seduction is attended with two fruits equally to the praise and glory of God: of which the first is, his defeat and discomfiture by the election according to grace, in whom the Spirit is mighty to work the work which He wrought in Jesus Christ; and thus the glory of God's almighty power and saving grace is shewn forth.

The second effect is that described in the passage before us, where the temptation of Satan succeedeth against the many, who, giving ear to his glozing seductions, turn away their ear from the truth, and love not to hear it, but are more glad to hear some counterfeit of it, some abridgment of it, something intermediate and palliative to their evil hearts; until at length the evil leaven operating more and more, they utterly reject the whole, and apostatise into error. And God doth now interfere with His stern judgment, and "sendeth them strong delusion." He doth not stand by idle and indifferent, while thus beholding the dishonour of His Son, but He asserteth His honour by visiting in His wrath those who reject Him: and as they have offended, so are they judged. They offended by wilfully blinding their eye against the truth; and their judgment is to be blinded more and more. Satan they received, when God entreated them to receive His Son. They rejected their glory, and elected their destruction; wherefore God, who useth Satan to His own glory, doth unloose and unbridle him against the reprobates, and open their hearts to receive him; and they are filled with the wine of strong delusion; and their conscience is seared with a red hot iron, and they lose the very capacity of discovering and loving truth, but do, of their own will and preference, love a lie; and so hasten into the condition of the devil himself, who is "a liar from the beginning, and the father of lies:" "that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." Such is the progress of every apostasy: not proceeding without the preaching of the word, and certain to follow upon the preaching of the word, so long as this present dispensation endureth. And for this very reason I would go forth to preach the gospel everywhere, in order to separate the moral chaos of the world into these two parts,—a Church, and an apostasy; to divide the light from the darkness; to shine also into the darkness, and shew its deformity; to order the beauty of holiness, and to manifest the exceeding sinfulness of sin. Preaching is the ordinance appointed of God for this very end: and wherever it produceth this effect, it worketh the good pleasure of the will of God, and advanceth His glory;

where the preaching of the gospel is not, neither is Satan's malignity perceived, nor is God's grace revealed, nor man's heinous wickedness, nor the person of Christ, nor the work of the Spirit, nor any one of the mysteries which it is God's purpose to manifest. Everything remains a chaos, a dark and waste deep, unproductive of any fruit unto the Creator, possessed of darkness and death, without any rival of their usurped reign, without a demonstration or a witness of their usurpation.

If these be right views of preaching, and I can find no others in the Holy Scriptures, what is there in our doctrine which hindereth this noble office of God to be carried on in any, and in all parts of the earth, to which it seemeth good in the Lord's sight to ordain it? And that it doth indeed so seem good, is apparent from that last parting commandment of the Lord, "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you, even unto the end of the world." That this commission is co-extensive in place with the habitations of men, is manifest from the words, "teach all nations;" and from the coincident words of Mark, "Go unto all the world, and preach the gospel unto every creature." That it is co-extensive in time with the present age or dispensation, which runneth on until the coming of the Lord, is likewise manifest from the promise, "Lo I am with you all the days, until the consummation of the age." Upon the apostles, therefore, and upon those who succeeded them in the office of preaching the gospel, and upon the ministry of this day, and upon the ministry that shall succeed us until the consummation of the age, it must be incumbent, as we honour the last parting charge of the Lord, and tender His good pleasure, that we should preach the gospel everywhere round the world, among the nations, for a witness against the many, and for an effectual calling unto the few who are chosen. And the ministry of the word, as an ordinance of Christ, is so far forth guilty in His sight, as it cometh short of this its appointed office. It is not clear from the blood of all men, until it is making a good and a true testimony unto all men. I do

not say that any of the elect of God shall by its negligence be lost, because He is larger than His ordinances; or that the Lord shall want a sufficient plea against the reprobate; but I do say, that the foundations of the earth will get more and more out of course, and the ways of men more and more wicked, and the judgments of the Lord more and more heavy, according to the decline and iniquity of preaching.

And herein, I may remark by the way, consisteth one of the many beauties and excellences of an Established Church, that it doth make provision for the preaching of the gospel to every creature within the bounds of that nation over which it is established, whereby one ordinance of Christ is fulfilled, and He, as the Head of providence, doth bless that land with power, and wealth, and great glory. Yet are not we, who are ministers of an Established Church, each commissioned, and by law holden to preach the gospel to every creature within our bounds, thereby exonerated from the commission of preaching it to every nation under heaven; but rather bound, as being of the ministry, to exonerate the order to which we belong, and the office which we fill, by doing whatever we can to bring it to be commensurate with the commandment of the Lord: and forasmuch as the flock of Christ is, by His appointment, made chiefly dependent upon the pastors, as appeareth from the epistles to the seven churches of Asia, and many other parts of Scripture, it becomes a duty incumbent upon every minister of Christ, in order to defend the ministry from wrath, and on many other accounts, to help in that good work. And hereon I rest the duty of promoting missions to the heathen and to the apostate Churches: because it was the last parting commandment of the Lord, that all nations should be preached unto till He come again, and it was His last parting promise, that He would be with all who should labour in this vocation till the end of this dispensation. To this I do not need to have superadded the vain and heretical hope, that thereby we shall be able to convert the world, which is condemned, and remaineth to be destroyed; or that we will bring in the universal dispensation which awaiteth the glorious coming of the Lord. Sufficient for me it is, that we shall thereby do the will of Him that sent us, and lift up in

the ear of the earth a witness against its wickedness, a prophecy of its destruction, and a glorious hope thereafter, of blessed days to the election and to all the redeemed creatures of God.

After these explanations, I can see no way of fastening this objection upon the doctrine of this parable, otherwise than by proving that in some part or parts of the world, there is no soil to receive the seed of the word. And, even in this case, though I were assured that every grain of it would be trampled under foot, I am far, very far indeed, from allowing that it ought not to be preached there, for a witness against such wicked men, for the aggravation of their wickedness, and a speedy consumption of them from the face of the ground. Was it not so with the preaching of Noah? and was it not so with the witness of Lot? But by what process of reasoning, I ask, or by what prophetic insight, shall any one dare to say that there is no soil in such and such regions of the earth; seeing the Lord hath promised, "that his word shall not return unto him void, but profit in the thing whereunto he hath sent it?" Do they say, because the people are uncivilised, therefore there cannot be a soil? I answer, it were just as good a reason to say, "Because the people are civilised, there cannot be a soil." For what is civilisation, that it should be preferred to the preaching of the gospel, in the order of God's arrangement? If civilisation be the right honest occupation and discharge of those various functions which we have described above, of the relative duties of man to man, and the dominion of man over the inferior creatures, then I hold that this, though not altogether, is in a chief measure dependent upon the knowledge and belief of revealed truth, and therefore where this is already in a measure by reason set on foot, they wait for revelation to perfect it; and where it is not at all begun, they wait for revelation to begin it. But will revelation take a root where it is not? Revelation will take a root in the soil of a true and honest heart. And who is he that can say this is not as frequently present in the ruder as in the more refined states of society? The effect of refinement is, in most cases, to introduce deceit and double-mindedness, to foster avarice and covetousness, and to engender the vanity

and outward pretence which attend upon distinctions. And where it proceedeth in the absence of the Church of Christ, I would be much more apt to fear lest it should scourge and destroy the soil of an honest heart, than to hope that it would produce it: and I believe you will find that the gospel hath taken a root among the simple Hottentots, and Greenlanders, and Esquimaux, and South Sea Islanders, more readily than amongst the more polished and refined of the heathen nations; whose refinement standeth in the oppression of one rank by another, in the extremes of riches and poverty, in the bonds of superstition, and the horrid rites of idolatry. But where civilisation proceedeth in the presence, and by the side of God's Church, then it is to be believed that it will be the reflection of the light and truth of the gospel, in the natural reason and good sense, the blessing of God upon the house and family of Obed-edom, where the ark of His covenant abideth, and the consequence of those lower growths of good feeling and manifold duty which prepare the soil to carry the seed of everlasting life, when it may please God to sow it in the heart. Civilisation is, of one kind, the work of idolatry and tyranny; of another kind, it is the work of Christianity and freedom. To the former I would send the gospel, to condemn it and contend with it, and gather out of it those whom it may have pleased God to preserve from its pollutions, or whom it may please Him to deliver. But I would have no encouragement to go thither from the hope of converts, for I would have more hope of barbarous people than of them.

This, therefore, is the sum of the matter: That the whole of this lower creation, with man at its head, has, since the Fall, through the virtue of the eternal sacrifice of Christ, been saved from the dispensation of death, and brought under the dispensation of the promise of the Christ; being now constituted in such sort as through all its chambers, from the invisible and indivisible reason of man, to the outmost bound of creation, to prophesy of a Redeemer and a redemption about to come. That this testimony is made by man in the natural condition, before yet he hath partaken of the Holy Ghost, by the honest occupation of the talents which God hath given him, after the pursuits of truth and uprightness, in defiance of the deceits

and falsehoods of Satan. Which honesty and truth are not without great denial of flesh and blood, and opposition of the world, to be pursued; but, being pursued, are to be regarded as the denial of Satan, and the preaching of God in that sphere of the unrenewed man. And this is a work of God: it is not *the* work of God; but it is a work of God, which He worketh in the soul of those whom He purposeth unto life eternal; in whom He beginneth to work, not at their conversion, but from the very womb. And there is a system in His work before conversion, which is to create honesty and truth, as after conversion it is to work faith. The one wrought according to God's sovereign decree, and the other according to the same full and sovereign decree. And as it is wrong for any man to date the dealings of God with his soul from conversion, but to consider them from the womb, and especially from baptism; so judge I it to be wrong to date God's dealings with any nation, or with the world, from the day of the preaching of the gospel therein, but from a higher origin, even from its beginning to become a nation. And I may generalise the matter still more, and say, that it is wrong to date God's dealings with the world from the time of the preaching of the gospel, but from the day of the Fall; and to consider all things as working together, as having been ordered of the Father and working together, for the glory of the personal and the mystical Christ, for Christ the Head, and for the Church the members. Nay, and we may go higher still, and declare, that from the day of creation, before the Fall, and before the entering in of sin, the end of the world was a work of grace, it was all to testify the grace of God, the free and sovereign grace of God, and thereby to bear witness unto God himself, as the only King and Potentate, the King of kings, and the Lord of lords;—against whose high prerogative, if I have spoken anything in this discourse, as who can speak of these things aright? then may He forgive me, and hinder it from giving any offence, or doing any evil to the least of His children. But if I have spoken righteously, and with a regard to the truth, then know I for certain, it will not return unto Him void, but will accomplish the thing which He intendeth, and prosper in the thing whereto He hath sent it.

LECTURE SUPPLEMENTARY.

THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE DOCTRINE TAUGHT IN THIS AND THE PRECEDING LECTURES, CONCERNING A SOIL IN MAN PREPARED FOR THE WORD.

IT seemeth to me that any one attentively considering the parable, so far as we have proceeded in it, if asked what improvement is to be made of it, would answer at once: "The use of the whole is to shew forth unto men that there are certain conditions of human nature, or forms of character, in which the seed of the word will not bear fruit; and that there is another condition in which it will bring forth very abundantly: and therefore the improvement of the whole ought to be a demonstration of those means over which a man hath power, and which he ought to take, for this very end of preparing himself in view of the Divine operation of spiritual husbandry. For though it is not in our power, either to procure that seed, or to water it, or to dress the plant; yet ours it is, to have ourselves in readiness for the supernatural work; if it should please the supernatural Workman to undertake it." There is, indeed, another form of improvement which suggesteth itself: namely, That we should take heed how we hear the preached word, and how we patiently entertain it in our hearts. But this belongs to a more advanced part of the parable, and is, indeed, the conclusion of the whole. Wherefore I do the rather choose to reserve what I have to say upon this part of the subject till we arrive at that point, and shall now address myself to explain what are the means which are made effectual by God, unto the production of a soil apt for the spiritual husbandry. This will form the improvement of the first part of the parable; and instruction upon the subject of hearing will form the proper improvement of that which follows, I am, therefore, in dependence upon

the Divine blessing, to search out, and to set forth in order that education and discipline of man which God requireth towards the reception and retention and fructification of Divine truth: what is that husbandry of a natural order, and those fruits of a natural kind, which prepare the soul for bearing the fruits of everlasting life; what, in short, is the practical application and improvement of all that hath been set forth in the four former lectures concerning the highway, the stony soil, and weedy ground; and of the doctrine taught in this, concerning the good soil of an honest heart.

Now, the order of the arrangement of this Supplementary Lecture seems naturally to suggest itself, from what hath been set forth above, concerning the preparatory work of the outward Spirit in the conscience of man, and in the laws of all life downwards, from man to the elemental world. For if the soil of "an honest and good heart" be produced by the right honest intercourse and traffic of human life with the living and existent creatures around us,—as I have argued above that it is,—then is it clear that the whole of our attention should be directed to open and explain to you the way in which you should occupy yourselves with possessing and enjoying the advantages which are bestowed upon us by the Creator over all the things which are around us, whether they be our fellowmen, who are our companions; or the lower creatures, the fruits of the earth, and the elements, which are our servants, the instruments of our industry and the means of our support. For, as I have said, I believe that the soil of "an honest and good heart" is produced from the wise and temperate use of all these; which I call means unto grace, though not means of grace; that is, means to this very end, and no further, of producing in us a soil proper to receive the seed and bear the fruits of the word of God. And of these means unto grace, which are anterior to, and preparatory for, the work of the Divine Seedsman, I perceive everything rightly used to be a part; and the whole to consist in a life completely ordered according to the rule of right reason, and honest upright behaviour. So that the field is one of the utmost breadth, requiring both great comprehensiveness, exact order, and due subordination in respect of extent. It were a pleasant field to expatiate in, and

most profitable to shew how all the visible creation, with man's body at the head of it, is only the Divine foreshewing of the creation which is to be, and the right use of it according to nature, the preparation for that pure use of it which we have in the Spirit: to shew also how all instincts of the animal life, with reason as their mistress, being rightly used, do prepare the way for the receiving of the word of life which is in Christ. The great difficulty we feel is to define our bounds, so as to keep the proper subordination of parts to a whole; but considering how much hath been said upon these various soils, we will take the wider range in the improvement of it; which we think may well observe the following method.

First, To shew the right views which we should hold of the creation, including man, in its present state;

Secondly, The use which we should make of the inferior creatures;

Thirdly, The way in which we should carry ourselves to our fellow-men; and,

Fourthly, The duty which we should observe towards God and His ordinances, in order to prepare a soil for receiving the seed of the word when it shall please Him to plant it in us by His Holy Spirit.

I. And, first, as all good use of things cometh out of right knowledge, we shall address ourselves to speak of the views which you should entertain of the creatures in their present state, and of yourselves as the head of them. In order fully to profit from the constitution under which the world hath been permitted to exist from the merits of Christ's death, and under which it hath been made to exist, rather than any other, for the purpose of shewing forth the advent of Christ to ransom and redeem us from bondage, we ought to study that bondage which it is under, and to listen to that cry which it lifteth up for deliverance. We ought to sympathise with it, and do what we can to comfort it, forasmuch as we are the only part of creation possessed of the power of knowing and understanding either the certainty, or the time, or the manner of that deliverance which it is yet to have. There ought also to be a pity and regret, that for our sakes, and because of our

transgression, the neck of all creation should thus be bowed down; and also a joy and a glory, that by the Son of man, and for the Son of man, it shall be lifted up again. This is always the manner of the Holy Spirit, when speaking by the mouth of the prophets, who continually, in the prospect of sorrow and affliction and judgment and wrath, cast a pitiful eye, and drop tears of sorrow and words of warning and consolation, over the earth and the beasts of the field, the mountains, and the trees of the wood, the sea, and the rivers and the fountains of water. And in no case, known to me, doth it occur, that the blessings of the advent of our Lord are foretold, without special congratulations to every inferior creature of God upon the earth, and invocations to sing and to shout aloud, and to rejoice with singing, and to clap their hands for joy. In like manner, every child of the Spirit, and every one who, not yet regenerate, doth nevertheless desire and wait on till it shall please the Lord to visit him with His salvation, ought to follow the example of the Holy Spirit, and enter feelingly into the bondage of all nature, animate and inanimate, and make mention in its ear of the great jubilee which is hastening on, when "the wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the rose."

In all those profane and infidel exaltations of the present condition of the natural world, therefore, we should take no part; for they bespeak the intoxication of the sense, and the idolatry of the mind with the creature. But, while we bless the Lord for the grace which hath alike spared us together in existence, and endowed us with many kindly consolations of our captivity, we ought never for a moment to think or speak of our present case, and the present case of all things, otherwise than as a sore visitation for sin, a state of weakness, and of travail, and of death. There is no worse sign of the times we live in, no clearer proof of the debasement of the soul of man, and demonstration of the ignorance of the world to come, than the many poems which are written, and the many songs which are sung, and the many journeys which are performed, in honour of certain lovely scenes and beautiful objects of nature. They will call me a Goth for saying so:

but it is a Christian, and a Christian minister, who speaketh so; and one who heretofore drank at this fountain as copious draughts as any of the nature-worshippers. But how can any one who is at all interested in the primeval state of paradise which he hath lost, or at all believeth in the millennial and the eternal glory of the world of which he is an heir, take delight and shout forth joyfully in contemplating the present misery of the lower world; when he beholdeth the sandy wastes, the rugged mountains, the hoary forests, the inhospitable climates of heat and cold, the changeful accidents of thunderstorm and thunderbolts, the avalanches of snow and inundations of wasteful waters, the iron frosts, the drenching rains; in one word, the natural barrenness of the earth's bosom, and the evil conditions which she underlieth since the Fall? I speak not now of the partial deliverance which the well-bestowed sweat of man may give her from the rugged wilderness of her nature; but I speak of her proper nature, and shew you how ill-attuned to truth are those rapturous strains which they utter over the elemental world.

If I speak of the element of air, which was made to nourish human life; what infinite variations is it not liable to, every one burdened with pain and death to thousands! What unwholesome vapours, what deadly blasts, what desolating storms! Look, and behold how almost one half of man's care and labour is to defend himself from the ills with which the air is loaded. His clothing, his houses, his fires, and all his other shelters, cannot spin out to threescore years and ten that term of life which at the beginning was made to endure for a thousand.—If I speak of the element of water, which was made to sustain both vegetable and animal life, behold how it hath drowned more than half the world, swamped a goodly portion of the rest, gathered itself into wide-spread lakes, seas, and oceans, leaving great portions of the earth parched, barren, and blighted, for want of sufficient supplies. And though the labour of man hath made its streams and rivers both useful and ornamental, how little so they are by natural inclination is beheld in the mighty rivers of the western hemisphere rushing through the depths of hoary forests, and filled with every beast the most destructive of human life. And

over that element how little has man the power, who cannot cross a brook or inland bay without peril of his life, and must bridge it over with laborious masonry, or boat across it with a continual risk of life!—If I should speak of the element of earth, how it runneth to waste as fast as it can, and hasteth to become a wilderness inaccessible to the tread of man; giving itself up to be tenanted by the beasts of prey, or by the serpent's slimy brood; what poisons it produceth, what cold damps it exhaleth, what interruptions to the going forth of man; what toil it taxeth him withal; what long hours of labour, what long weeks and months of patient and watchful toil, yea, what generations of a laborious population, must be given to it before it will consent to produce in any abundance, or to support in any considerable numbers, the race of men. Before you can set an ordinary meal upon your table, how many hands must have laboured, how many brows sweat, how many careful hearts combined before it came thither: but if you would set forth a feast, how many lives must have been periled, how many lashes of the whip endured, how much blood shed in desolating war, before the raw material of it can be brought to your home; how many ingenious men must have laboured in the shop, how many in the damp and darksome mine, how many broiled their faces over the oven, before it can be placed in a comely style upon our tables;—and how we are foot-bound to little spots of the earth's surface, removing to and fro with infinite pains and toils: and this law of gravitation brings us plumb down if we would ascend to any elevation above the earth: and the laws of space and time set a fearful restraint upon the freedom of the human will, and the liberty of human action.——But it is endless and infinite to speak of the miserable plight into which that elemental nature hath been reduced, which was created to be the vital breath of our life, the wholesome nourishment of our body, the obedient servant of our will.

Now, how men, looking upon the violent hands which sin hath laid upon these things, and the base servitude into which they are compelled by Satan, "the prince of the power of the air," and "the ruler of the darkness of this world," can do anything but pity and lament their miserable case, I greatly

wonder. It seems to me little less than an insult to the poor sin-enthralled and suffering creature, to lift up in its ear a pœan of joy; and it argues, in all who do so, either great ignorance and insensibility towards the creature, or great degradation and debasement in themselves. Indeed, I trace it to nothing else than Satan's having blinded our eyes to our own bondage under this same evil law, that we feel not the kindred bondage of our own body and mind; are not taught to groan within ourselves, and cannot hear the groanings of all nature around us, We accept Satan's offer of this world and its kingdoms, and fall down and worship them: we delight ourselves with them as they are; we share not their burden, we pity not their slavery, we are not vexed that we should be defeated of their ministry; we look not for any deliverance or emancipation for them; we care not to hear of it: and so we are stolen away from the hope of Christ's advent to redeem the body, and all the creatures dependent upon the body, from their thraldom.

These same views, which it is proper for a good and wise man to live under with respect to the ground which God hath cursed, it is proper for him to live under with respect to all the living creatures, or the whole animal creation, which are cursed along with it. Their birth in groaning agony; their life in continual peril of one another; the absolute necessity, in order to live, that they should make war upon one another; their continual tendency to the wild and savage state, and in that state their furious and inveterate destruction of one another; the defensive attitudes which the beasts of the field must maintain against the winged creatures of the air, and these again against the beasts of the field, and both against the creeping things of the earth. And then, how man for his own defence must turn out, with all his faculties, and circumvent and slay the wild creatures which have made the earth their own; and, in order to live, must for many generations feed on them almost entirely. And when he hath reclaimed the forest, and made it a fertile field, how still the sheep that clothes him must be led to the slaughter, and the bullock that labours his field must be stalled for the knife. It is very pitiful to look at a city full of peaceable and ingenious men; to see what

droves and flocks must pass into their gates for destruction; and at what a fearful expense of animal life human life must be supported. And you cannot mend it. It is a constitution of things which at the best is bad. For if you relax your bondage, the tamed beasts run wild again, and destroy the face of the reclaimed ground: or if you cease to feed upon them, they multiply, and eject man from his right. And if you stand still or relax in the labouring of the ground, it returns to thorns and thistles, and noxious animals increase apace: vermin of every name, weeds of every description, and wild beasts which are able to destroy man at a blow: these all hang upon the rearward of civilisation, to cut us off if we fall back. We cannot stand still; the feller must ply his work, the hunter must ply his work, the fattener must ply his work, the slayer must ply his work: for if man do it not according to a measure of humanity and wisdom, the beasts will do it themselves, without either humanity or wisdom.

He that looks on these things and beholdeth not the bondage of all creatures under the law of corruption, is indeed blinded by the god of this world: he that looks upon these things and feeleth not, is lost to all tenderness of feeling: he that looks upon them and hopes not and desires not the day of redemption, is indeed deprived of the sweetest consolation of this our fallen and sinful estate. Do I say that we ought to weep and make continual lamenting, as your sensitive sentimentalists and shrinking men of feeling do? No! It is the ordinance of God for this sinful estate, to keep it from utter death and dissolution. It is death warded off to a distance. It is the blossoming of a life which the wasting winds are always nipping. But we cannot make a better of it: we cannot change it: we may humanise it—that is, bring it under the dominion of man, cultivate the earth, and tame the animals, and those that will not be tamed destroy; the poisonous extirpate, the ravenous restrain; and seek to subdue all things to wholesome laws, and be ourselves subject to the same. This is all that is in our power: and, when thus the creature hath been improved to the utmost, look around you, in this very island, and behold whether the crimson dye hath been taken out of it. No, there it is; kept out of sight as much

as may be; but defying all power beneath the moon to alter it. You might as well think to clear the air of tempests, or the sea of storms, or the earth of stubborn unwillingness to yield anything of herself better than thorns and briers, as think to cure or remedy the stern law of pain and death, and obstinate resistance unto man, under which the creatures have come.

Yes, I will tell you what more we can do after we have done all that British civilisation—and there is none so perfect in the world—hath brought about. We can understand the account which God hath given us of this the evil constitution of the creatures: we can search into His revelation concerning it; and, finding that it was not so in the beginning, but came by sin, for the fault of man, we can hate sin the more bitterly; while we the more poignantly repent of our sins, and drop a tear for this suffering creation; and lead upwards to heaven's gate the doleful song of our common suffering; and pray for that redemption in which we are taught to believe; and bless the Redeemer the more diligently; and call upon the sun and moon and stars, whose brilliancy the thick clouds hath obscured; and call upon the air, whose balmy sweetness Satan hath poisoned; and upon the woods and the waters, which savage beasts have usurped, for a concealment whence to come forth against man, their sovereign lord; and the earth, and every plant which drinks the dew, and every beast which crops the herb, and everything that hath a being, can we, yea, ought we, and will we, when thus schooled, call upon to praise and bless the Redeemer, who preserved them from instant death, hath continued them in an embryo life, and will bring them into perfect, glorious, and eternal harmony and well-being for ever.

And, of man, made to be the ruler of all these things whose desecration I have been setting forth, how great is the degradation in himself, and the hard inflexible law of evil under which he hath been bound! Look at him, as you find him without the helping and healing hand of law; behold him as he traverseth the deserts and roameth in the woods; or look at him in a civilised state, when anything hath loosened the bit and bridle of government with which his mouth is held, as he was in France some thirty years

ago; or look at him within the bounds of law, intoxicating himself, degrading himself beneath the brutes; fighting, raging, and rioting in every possible disguise; or look at him when escaping the law, prowling about like the wolf, and more cunning than the fox, more fell than the tiger, and more diligent in tracking his prey than the stanchest of the bloodhound tribes. But, oh! behold his wars; the fury of his onset, the stoutness of his battle, the havoc of his victory. For example's sake, behold a man who hath overtopped law, and reached the liberty of shewing what is in man,—a Napoleon, for instance,—see millions fall before him, and fall behind him; his own eye unbedewed, his own cheek unblanched, his heart unconscious of a pang; while he lets slip the last pack of his bloodhounds. Oh! oh! surely man, the master of all, who hath fallen from the greatest height of all, hath also fallen to the greatest depth of all.

Nor can this be helped: for if civilised states will not study war, and stand in an offensive attitude, then, as heretofore, the barbarous people, with which the earth teems, allured on by the scent of prey, will come down upon them like the wolf upon the fold, and cast the world long centuries back into the dreary waste of ignorance and lawlessness. It is as vain to talk of peace and peace societies, in the present dispensation, as to talk of a cloudless sky and an untempestuous sea. And it is vain to decry the calling of a soldier, as if it were not as necessary to the well-being of any state as the calling of a hunter and a husbandman: the first, to bridle savage nations and arrest ambitious men; the second, to clear the woods and coverts of destructive creatures; and the third, to clear the earth of thorns and briers and bristly forests. These vain theories of a federal union of kingdoms to abolish war; and of the gradual influence of the people over their rulers, preventing wars; and of the common interest which commerce engenders gradually making war to cease, are all vague and unsound, and based upon a false assumption, that man is able to alter the iron conditions into which the Fall has brought him, and in which the Almighty Will doth keep him till the Redeemer shall come to take possession of the purchased inheritance. So also are the theories, which in these infidel years have crept

in, concerning crimes and punishments, and all legal restraints, as if they were cruelties and arbitrary impositions upon the subject; as if it were highly unphilosophical, as they are pleased to term it, to make man responsible for what his circumstances necessarily engender in him. As if man had no power to say *I will not*, as if he had no conscience to say *I must not*. And the philosophical destroyers have come the length of saying, that he is not responsible for his faith; which truly is to say, that he is not responsible for knowledge, or feeling, or action, which all contribute in their spheres to a soil and atmosphere for faith. The reprobates have passed all bound; they are ready to burst all barriers: they have become fanciful, notional, empirical, with respect to every reasonable principle of human well-being and axiom of human life. And ever and anon, as they destroy another timber in the structure, and pull down another stone in the foundation, they say, "See what discoveries we are making! see what knowledge we have attained to! Oh, what fools our fathers were! oh, what wise men we! Such an age of light it is! Wonderful what achievements of liberal principles! Surely the world will be perfected in our time!". To me it is manifest, from these very occurrences, that the ship is breaking up, when, in the midst of a perilous voyage, (for this all allow,) the carpenters are giving her as thorough a repair as if she were in the dock.

But come nearer, and let us look into ourselves, and see the working of this law of the flesh, and the obscuration of the higher faculties of man within us. Here be ye all the judges: and tell me truly, if the body be not brought under a base thraldom to the meats and drinks which are naturally produced by the earth, or ingeniously prepared from its productions; if intemperance be not the native element of the sense, and lasciviousness the natural element of the eye, and infidelity the natural element of the mind, and indifference the natural element of the heart of man. Tell me truly, brethren, if you do not feel that the light of God within you is oppressed under the darkness of the sense; and if it be not with the most awful strugglings that you are able to carry into effect any of the commandments of God. Even we, who have the

first-fruits of the Spirit, do we not feel the bondage of this corruptible estate, of this body of sin and death, of this fallen world? Is not the natural man, with all his servants of the animal and vegetable creation, opposed to the Spirit of God? They best know the violence of the stream who have swam up against the stream; and these are the servants of the living God, who are struggling after their redemption. To you, little need be said of the hard service which we have to serve, and the extreme bondage under which we are bound. But, alas! I think that even we have forgotten our bondage and oppression. There is an universal compromise and league, which the children of God have struck with the beautiful daughters of nature. I say not that the incestuous marriage hath been consummated; but there is that kindly feeling, that delicate treatment, that open courtesy, that dalliance with the creature, which bespeaks us not far from the consummation of the marriage. And I am very sure, that while such feelings exist towards those various forms of fallen life with which we are surrounded, there can be no preparation of a soil for the seed of the word of God; but there must be the very reverse,—a scourging of the soil, and a total incapacity of man even for the hearing of spiritual things; when his faith, and his feelings, and his very knowledge, have been in a manner debauched and dissipated amongst the loves and desires of that world which is enmity with God.

Now, so long as our knowledge is thus possessed with false and erroneous views of the creatures which are around us, and of the ends for which they are constituted of God; while we think that they are working in their courses according to goodness; we cannot use them aright, we must necessarily go along the same stream with them, and be lost in the same abyss of destruction to which they are doomed. For every intelligent creature must first be approached by knowledge before he can be brought into obedience: this is the end of revelation, to set our knowledge right concerning ourselves, and all the things with which we are surrounded: and while we give ourselves to the knowledge of sense, as a neighbouring nation doth, what can we attain unto but the enjoyment of sense? While we believe the sensible world to

be well and righteously composed, as our philosophers do, what can we do but worship it? While we make of it a heaven, as our poets do, what ear can we have for the doctrine of universal corruption? We must submit to be taught truly concerning the first condition of all these things, in primitive beauty and innocency; concerning the present fallen estate into thraldom and bondage; concerning their present sufferings therein, and their silent witnessing and continual cravings unto God for redemption; and concerning the redemption that is promised to them all, in the day of the restitution of all things, when the heavens shall hold the Redeemer no longer. This teaching of the word of God we must submit to. We must receive our first principles of cosmogony from revelation, and adopt them as the card by which we steer our course of action; before ever our intercourse with the visible world, or human life, will leave behind it any soil upon which the seed of the word will take root and flourish.

II. Having thus shewn you the views which it is proper to take of the bondage which now lieth heavy upon all things, and the redemption which abideth them against the day of the Lord; we now proceed to point out to you the way of carrying yourselves towards them, which tendeth to produce that worthy and excellent character, that simple heart and single eye, which is apt to receive and to delight in the word of God, when it shall please the Lord to present it to our acceptance.

1. And, first, I would speak of the inanimate creatures, the fruits of the earth, the beauties of nature, and all the blessings with which we are surrounded;—towards which, if we will always act under the knowledge that they are possessed and overruled by the prince of darkness, and, in order to be good, must be sanctified with the word of God and with prayer, we shall do well: but if we will commit ourselves to them without an apprehension of their evil, give ourselves up, and abandon ourselves to their enjoyments, we shall do evil, and without doubt be taken in some snare or other. Or if we will draw a line amongst them, and say, These are good, and may be safely indulged in; these are evil, and

may at no hand be meddled with; we shall add to the former this other error,—that there be certain things which cannot be sanctified by God unto the use of His people: and so restore the Jewish bondage of clean and of unclean, among the creatures which God hath cleansed by the blood of His own Son. The true principle to go upon, therefore, in knowing, in appropriating, in using the creatures, is, that they are all most seductive in themselves to the nature of man, and links of the chain which binds him in darkness, and therefore, cautiously and carefully to be intermeddled with; but, seeing we must pass our lives amongst them, and be beholden to them for the support of our life, for the means of well-being, and of well-doing, we ought to believe that, being considered with the eye of reason, and in the light of revelation, they are all good, and capable of affording to us most excellent instruction concerning God, and a most excellent discipline of all our moral and religious faculties. Therefore, we ought to look at them with the eye of reason, not with the eye of sense; in the light of revelation, not in the darkness of nature; being thankful unto God for whatever portion of His goodness He permitteth us to behold and to enjoy. I put reason and revelation in conjunction with one another, because I believe, as I have set forth in several places, that the light of reason is a gift of God, for which we are beholden, and shall be responsible, to THE WORD, "in whom was life, and the life was the light of men;" and that it is a derogation from his rights to omit the continual claim and assertion of reason as His gift bestowed upon man not in full property, but in trust until the judgment. Now, I say, that these two agree in teaching us one constant lesson concerning the use of the creatures, that they are to be partaken with temperance; for intemperance in eating or drinking, or beholding, or possessing, or any other mode of enjoying, doth as much obscure the light, and impede the actings of the reason, as it doth vex the Holy Spirit, and quench the life of God in our souls.

The apostle, when entreating of the intemperance and lusts of the heathen, findeth their guilt to consist in two things chiefly; of which the first is, That they "changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more

than the Creator, who is God over all blessed for ever;" and the second, that they "changed the natural use of the creatures into that which is against nature," and burned with all manner of intemperate and unnatural lusts. And he placeth the intemperate desires as a consequence of the idolatrous worship of the creature; yea, he assigneth it as an express judgment of God upon them for the same: "Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness. For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: and even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient." To be guarded against the like degradation of our bodies and minds beneath the creatures, against becoming the slaves of the senses, which are the slaves of the visible world, when they are not under the control of the reason, or Spirit of God, (which are one in substance and in origin, though diverse in degree,) it is therefore most necessary, that we should guard against the idolatry of anything which is created and made. And what is idolatry? Not the bowing down unto a graven image; this is the form of it; but the act is the loving of anything, and the desiring of it for its own sake, and the using of it for its own sake: wherefore the apostle calleth covetousness idolatry, because it affecteth a thing on its own account, instead of desiring it from God and for God, and using it to His glory. I do think, therefore, that even reason teacheth us we should ask of God that which we desire to possess; and when we have obtained it, give Him thanks, and again ask His blessing upon it; and so, "whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, do all to His glory." Unless the natural reason, or the renewed spirit of man, be thus acknowledging God as its fear, it must either acknowledge itself as its fear, which is vanity, pride, and Stoicism; or it must acknowledge the creature as its fear, which is idolatry, and intemperance, and every evil.

A right apprehension, then, of God's propriety in all things, and a due acknowledgment of His goodness, is essential to the righteous use of the creatures; which, if we forget or neglect, He will give us also up, as heretofore He gave up the heathen, to all manner of intemperance and

uncleanness.—And this is very important to you, whose occupation is so much with traffic and merchandise, bringing you continually under a temptation to desire these things, and to delight in them, and to amass them, or to exchange them to the greatest advantage. Upon the continuance or increase of their value dependeth your own and your family's wealth; and, therefore, if you do not continually commit your way to God, and leave all to the disposal of His providence, your heart will be stolen away to the creature, and, as sure as the laws of God, covetousness or intemperance will be the consequence. And in your families, if you be not careful to keep up a continual acknowledgment of God, and reverence of Him before your wives and children, and servants, you may rest assured they will fall into some excesses; the women into vanity of dress and appearance, the young men into ambition or covetousness, the children into the indulgence of the appetite, and all into the neglect of God's word, and the incapacity of improving under its ministrations. Oh, what exceeding evils arise unto the soul from the indulgences of the table! what fatness of the heart, what stupidity of the mind, what bondage of the will! Look how it hampers and hinders even the worship of God, which must conform to or compromise it with the worship of the dinner-table. Now, brethren, I am no cynic nor satirist, but a lover of hospitality, and one who delights to see men rejoicing together in the abundance of the Lord: I have no taste whatever for interdicting meats and drinks, like the apostasy; and I can enter into the honest and lordly feeling of our Scottish Reformer, who, upon his deathbed, and the day before his decease, commanded his servant to broach a pipe of wine in order to welcome some one who had come to take farewell of him from this world, and bid him God-speed into the world to come. I say this was lordly; it was like a man who had achieved through grace the lordship over himself, and over the wine-cup, and could look upon it and durst use it, with innocency, as the good creature of God, which our Lord also did immediately before His crucifixion. Therefore I pray you, not to put it to the score of asceticism, when I earnestly exhort you to be constantly upon your guard against the evil

tendency of the creatures to engross and debase the spirit of man.

Again: are you students and inquirers into any region of nature? then, be assured, that the understanding will blind the reason: the understanding which judgeth by the sense of the nature of things, will blind the reason, which judgeth by the conscience. And of all blinds and eclipses, this is the most helpless which hath darkened all our scientific men to the light of God, and made them most contemptuous of the gospel of Christ. I might say professional men also, especially the medical profession which is conversant with the material world: I might say political men, especially those that consider themselves as enlightened in the science of political economy. Speak to any of them of justification by faith only in the vicarious sacrifice of Christ; speak to them of the quickening of the Divine Spirit, and the sovereign will of the Father in and over all things; or give them a hint that there is a Trinity of persons in the Divine substance, and if they do not openly blaspheme, or contemptuously mock you, depend upon it they will silently wonder at your gross stupidity and amazing folly. Be upon your guard also in the beholding of nature; in the viewing of its sublime and beautiful scenes, of its artificial decorations, and in the perusal of the works which treat of them; for through the avenue of taste and sentiment there is much poison poured into the mind. I have no hesitation in saying, that ninety-nine out of every hundred of our scene hunters, and scene describers, who flood the land with their effusions and reminiscences, are mere idolaters of the visible creation: and the tendency of their rhapsodies is to foster and engender the like spirit in every one who reads their writings, or, under the inspiration of their writings, visits the scenes which they describe. Do I therefore say, that we ought not to read such works, nor to visit such scenes? I never dream of such a conclusion. The scenes are not theirs, but God's creation, and the endowment of every one who feareth God; nor may I preclude myself from beholding them without blame. And if this atheistical scribbler, or that ignorant blasphemer, hath given me a representation of what I cannot visit, I may serve myself of him as of every

other wicked thing: but I must be twice guarded, for nothing is so powerful to beget its likeness as the spirit of man; yea, the Spirit of God is more quickening still, into whose hands we should commend ourselves while entering upon this and every other perilous undertaking; and by His help we shall proceed with a royal liberty and enlargement both in the understanding and in the tasting of the works of God.

I do furthermore put you on your guard against the coveting of that which is beautiful, and pleasant, and profitable, in the creature, against the ornaments of the person, and the furniture of the house, and the decorations of your grounds, and the enlargement of your fields, and the storing up of your moneys, and whatever else appertaineth to possession. And I feel that I should be very urgent in this, because of the nature of the place and age we live in. Do not, oh! do not tempt the Lord by coveting for yourselves a large fortune at the end of a certain period, or fighting and toiling to realise so many hundreds in the year, and to lay by so much, and to add so much annually to your stock; and to secure so much annually upon good securities. This is the reason why the Lord visits us with so many reverses, and cuts down the hopes of thousands. He cannot bear to see this Christian land so selling itself to mammon, and He would fain reclaim it to Himself. He is fighting against us in love, and cannot find in His heart to give us up. Be not ye thus; but be ye like Lot in Sodom, and Abraham in the land of Canaan, and Joseph in fleshly Egypt. Will the Lord prosper you the less? He will prosper you the more, for godliness hath the promise of the life that now is, and of the life that is to come. But go not to take the advice I give you, in the expectation of growing rich thereby; for that were turning grace into licentiousness, and using the promise unto our own destruction. What then? Do it because it is of God's honour, and worship, and glory, so to do. Do it that the soil of your heart may be prepared for receiving; or, if it have received, may be strengthened to bear and fructify the seed of the word. Do it because it is your salvation, and the salvation of your house, and the salvation of this city, and the salvation of this kingdom, to do so. Do it for the love of God, for the love of Christ and His

Church, for the love of yourselves, for the love of your neighbour, and for the love even of your enemy.

Do I say, then, limit your desires to a certain narrow circle; give so much by the hundred to God and to the poor; do not suffer your goods to amass; do not take advantage of your conditions? Why should I say so? Shall God not bless His own chosen ones? Shall He not enrich them? Shall He not honour them; even as Abraham, Joseph, and Daniel, were honoured, enriched, and blessed? God forbid that I should say so. I preach no such bondage. I preach to you the liberty of your Father's house: take what He sends, and enjoy it. If He sends more than you can use, let your flocks and herds increase, and your servants and your household, and become great and honourable. But give God the glory all the while, and look to Him, not to the substance which He hath given you. I pray you to give heed to what I say, and the Lord give you understanding in all things. And, finally, as to the enjoying of it, I say, enjoy it; ay, and with a merry heart enjoy it; giving glory unto God, and eating your bread with singleness of heart. It is setting too much store by it, not to enjoy it. But enjoy it in the Lord. Ask Him to bless it, and feed upon it heartily, and be of good cheer: and return Him thanks when you are filled with His bounty, and rise up refreshed to do His work: thus proceed without fear; for where fear is, there is bondage. But, brethren, we are not children of the bond-woman, but of the free.

2. With respect to the animals which at first received names from Adam, in token of their subjection to him, the first and best office of men is to deliver them from that unruly, and ravenous, and malicious nature which hath usurped the dominion over them. That they should disobey his call; that they should not reverence his erect majesty and heaven-beholding countenance; that they should harm him; that they should cruelly slay and devour him, is in the lower creatures the same high offence against the intention of their Creator, as that men should reject and disobey the voice of the Lord his God, and when God sent His eternal Son, the Life and Light of men, that they should take and with wicked hands crucify and slay Him. And to bring an animal

into subjection unto man, is partially to redeem it from bondage, and to restore it to its lost estate. Wherefore the Holy Ghost is not ashamed to appeal to the obedience of animals against the untractable and rebellious nature of His people: saying, "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider." Most idly, therefore, do they speak, who represent the natural state of the creatures as their right and their happiness; which truly is their misery, where the strongest preys upon the weakest, and all obtain a scanty and uncertain subsistence; their number few, their strength idle, their labour to destroy and lay waste. And as to being their right, if by that word, which is hardly proper of an irresponsible creature, be meant the first intention of their creation, and their ultimate destination; then the garden of Eden was their right, and to be under man was their well-being; and for their destination it is thus written by the prophets, "The wolf also shall lie down with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion, and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." And though they speak of the beauty and nobility of the creatures in their wild condition, I think it will be found universally that the creatures which have been tamed, under the care and attention of man are brought to far greater strength when labour is the object, and to far greater beauty when beauty is the object. That by cruel slavery, and an oppressive galling yoke, they may be reduced both to greater misery, and a more miserable appearance, than they wear in their native wilds, I well believe: but this is not what I advocate; for, next to the duty of delivering the creatures from the wildness and barbarity of their nature, I place the duty of treating them with humanity and kindness, when we have brought them into obedience. To conceive affection for them is very

ignoble; to devote time and attention to them, beyond what is necessary to their training for good uses, is very idle; to doat upon them, let sentimentalists talk of it as they please, is a most debased and debasing passion; but to be humane and merciful to them, is the part of a good man. They are our servants, and as servants to be treated with a return of proper food and rest, and there is no meanness in condescending to treat them with words of kindness and encouragement. The Lord shews His care over the cattle, by including them in the rest of the seventh day: and I may say, He shewed His kindness even to the land, in appointing it the rest of the seventh year.

And here I cannot pass without noticing the right which every animal hath to the Sabbath-day; and I think no good man ought to give his countenance to any person who plies the cattle on the Sabbath for hire, as upon ordinary working-days. It is true, that the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath; and in the service of God, the priests profaned the Sabbath, and were blameless: and works of necessity and mercy have always been excepted from the rest of the Sabbath; and there is a degree of activity which is necessary for exercise and health to the creatures; so that, here again, I lay down no positive interdict, as that a man should not, in order to worship with the congregation, avail himself of the means of conveyance from place to place; yet ought it always to be with great reluctance, when there is no other remedy of our distress: and I wish in my heart it were not necessary in any case. The keeping of the Sabbath in this, and in other particulars, is always taken by God as a great test of obedience. And so it is: for it requires cessation from gain, cessation from pleasure, cessation from our own inclinations in all things, and a complete cessation from the stated habits of another day; which, rest assured, will never be exactly conformed to, save in two cases of a people, either when they are rigid formalists or when they are truly devout. And the great body of a people are seldom brought to rigid formality in this or any other unprofitable and unpleasant institution; unless there should also be present in the community a strong feeling and large fervour of

devotion.—But without being diverted from our main subject by this digression, we will just quote, in proof of the value which God sets upon this test of obedience, a passage which we of this city would do well to remember, "And it shall come to pass, if ye diligently hearken unto me, saith the Lord, to bring in no burden through the gates of this city on the Sabbath-day, but hallow the Sabbath-day to do no work therein; then shall there enter into the gates of this city kings and princes sitting upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, they, and their princes, the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem: and this city shall remain for ever," (Jer. xvii. 24, 25.)

But, to return, I say again, that it is a very honest occupation of men to study the nature of every creature with which he is surrounded, from the industrious ant and the busy bee, up to the mighty horse, which paweth the ground, and maketh the heavens echo with his neighings; and everywhere to read the original purpose of the Creator's goodness unto man; and everywhere to see how for his sin they have been bowed down; and everywhere to study how he may give them a partial redemption, tame them, construct dwellings for them, guide their industry, store the fruits of it, drink their milk, and feed himself fat with butter and cheese of kine, make feasts of their nutritious carcases; and, in short, turn them to all their good and faithful ministries, whether in life or in death; for they are ours to feed upon, as is the green herb. How many lessons of wisdom, what cultivation of humanity, and honesty, and every natural virtue, cometh from a constant and righteous care of the creatures, we people that dwell in a city have little idea of; and I consider it to be no mean compensation for the many advantages of a city, that we are brought up out of the sight of the teeming earth, and the flocks and herds with which the face of the earth is covered. To tend the shepherd's charge must be a very worthy occupation of man, when Christ hath chosen it for His own designation, that He is the good Shepherd of the sheep; to tend the husbandman's charge must be very honourable, when the Father hath chosen it as His own designation over His Church: "and my Father is the Husbandman."

Such is the doctrine concerning the use of the lower creatures, as it is derived from revelation, with which reason hath a harmonious consent throughout: though she be not able to guide or lead the discoverer, she is able to perceive the beauty and truth of the discovery; as you see by her diligence in all places to subordinate the creatures, and to bring them back from the tyranny of their natural wildness and ferocity. Now, I say, that wherever men are thus rightly occupying their sovereignty and lordship over the inferior creatures, they are so far forth preparing a soil for the reception of the word of God, when He shall be pleased to send it. To this must be added many things beside; as the submission to wholesome laws, and the fulfilment of the various offices of life, the culture of ourselves, and the right treatment of one another; concerning which I shall not discourse under the following heads, seeing they must concur with the former towards the production of that soil of a good and honest heart which may be apt to the receiving of the word of God. But if men delight to destroy the creatures, or are content to hunt them in their savage state, instead of gathering them into flocks, and breeding them to useful labour, and for constant nourishment; and if they are content to let the wilderness continue a wilderness, and to roam the wild forests, then do they indicate thereby a self-willedness and wildness of nature, which is exceedingly ill-fitted for receiving the laws of God, or hearing His holy word. Reason must work in her sphere the well-being of all committed unto her care: man must be careful over that which he has, and be making a good use of the one talent, in order to receive an accession of gifts. This is the law of God's providence; and it is likewise the law of the communication of His grace, else why were it constantly reiterated in the gospel?

We were created to be lords over the creatures: we have fallen along with them under the dominion of sin; by the oppression whereof both we and the creatures are defrauded of the bountiful will of God, and brought into thraldom to the will of nature. From which, as we grow to be redeemed by the power of Christ, working in us the law of the Spirit of life, we grow again to be lords and masters of the creature, and

come to deliver it in a proportionate degree from its thraldom. For know, that the creature is not willingly made subject to bondage, but disliketh and groaneth under the oppression of it as much as we, and looketh for emancipation and deliverance from man, its lord, as we look for ours from God our Lord. To be afraid of the creature, and to avoid the use of it, is verily neither dignified nor religious in man; nor is it kind and merciful to the creature which crieth in our ear, "I would fain serve thee, O man! it is my honour and noble office to serve thee; but I am constrained against my will to be rebellious: it was my close confederacy and dutiful subserviency to thee which brought me under this yoke; and to thee I look for deliverance from this captivity which I unwillingly underlie. Oh, then, flee not from me! and leave me not alone. Now that the Creator hath looked down in mercy on thee and given thee a partial deliverance, come in thy freedom and set me free; for surely as thy captivity was my captivity, thy freedom will prove to be my freedom." Thus entreateth all nature, and thus aloud she crieth in the ear of redeemed man.

What mean, then, those idle and pestilent fellows by their doctrines of Eremites, and Stylites, and monastic orders, and other self-denying ordinances—self-denying in the letter, but self-adoring in the spirit? The cowards, the unpitiful churls, the unproductive sloths, is it for this that God sets men free from spiritual bonds, that they may build them prison walls, and naked cells, and addict themselves to fleshly torments, and leave the wilderness a wilderness still, and make the city a waste, and the fertile field a desolate waste? Upon such abusers of the Lord's gifts, and perverters of His purpose, He will rain fire and brimstone and storms of fury. And I discern the like spirit in a mitigated form, appearing amongst us Protestants, as it will always appear in every time of extreme ignorance like the present. That separation from certain of the honest customs of life, which is beginning to be introduced as parts of religious duty, the proscription of innocent mirth and well-timed hilarity, the violent philippics against the sports and amusements of the field, the proscriptions of that free and easy discourse which our fathers entertained, the formation

of a religious world different from the other world, and the getting up of certain outward visible tests of a religious character, the proscribing of all books unless they expressly treat upon some religious subject; also your Moravian establishments, and Methodist dresses, and many other things which I could name, savour to me of the same ignorance and misuse of the creature which the Papists carried to its perfection, as indeed they did every other abomination. In one word, all this is bondage, miserable bondage: the creation waileth to be liberated by liberated man. And shall redeemed man desert the redeeming of the creation? The creature loveth to be subject unto man, and shall man refuse its homage? Then God will cut him short for his churlish heart, and leave him to pass from the prison of nature into the prison of his own will.

Look around and behold this land in which we dwell, and which our fathers, by the might of God, wrested from these papal destroyers of the earth;—behold how it blooms and blossoms abundantly;—behold how full it is of all manner of tamed and industrious beasts;—behold how full it is of horses and of chariots;—behold how the wild and ravenous beasts have ceased from the land, the dragon and the crooked serpent;—behold how creation is redeemed by the redemption of the Church, how the forest timber bears the burden, and the mine yields the implements of the nation's defence;—behold how everything rejoiceth because of that most enlightened and noble constitution of the Church, which our fathers set up. It was not in religious parties, nor in religious meetings at taverns, nor in class-meetings, nor such like accomplishments of these latter days, that they went about their work of glorifying God; but in the palace, and in the court, and in the high parliament, and, above all, in the pulpit, in the congregation of the people, and in the camp, and in the tented field. And the minister of the gospel did not separate a few from the rest of his flock or parish, to coax and cozen them into self-esteem and uncharitableness; but he went about into every house, instructing every family, and examining the people, and enlightening them: and had any man better gifts or larger knowledge than his neighbours, then he was ad-

vanced to be an elder of the congregation; and was any one of a good understanding in affairs, and able to take the charge of God's household goods, then he was made a deacon of the congregation; and another, who had skill in learning, and able to teach the youth, was appointed schoolmaster of the youth; and another was a catechist, and another was a reader, and every father of a family was a sponsor for his family; and so the work went on like a work of God, reclaiming and reforming the whole state of the people. And forthwith the land began to yield its increase; the mountains were covered with sheep, and the little hills with herds, and the valleys with corn: the ingenuity of man teemed with inventions, and the arts grew up spontaneous. And behold the blessed fruits of the whole in the well-watered garden of this northern island, which you may be convinced of by comparing it with papal Italy, or Spain, or France, or any other enthralled dominion of the apostasy. And for their men of war, they are as stubble to our bow; they dare not, no one of the nations dare sustain our onset and charge of battle—the very cheer of our seamen is like the lion's roar in their ear, and turns their hearts to coldness: and our soldiers, with a naked sword in their naked hand, coated with their woollen clothes, can put to rout their men harnessed in burnished steel. Look, I say, on this island, and behold the redeeming power of a redeemed Church, in the redeemed creatures, and their obedient service to their kindly masters. Behold every plant of the field ministering to us either food, or clothing, or medicine. Oh! behold how kindly the fruits of the earth have become, how generous and cheerful;—behold how beautiful they are; how large, juicy, and productive, when recovered from their natural wildness; how they rejoice and sing for joy in the midst of us, because God hath made them glad. Which all cometh of man's resuming his lordship over the creation, and redeeming it from the power of the enemy, according as God resumeth His lordship over him, and the law of the Spirit of life maketh him free from the law of sin and death. Having obtained the victory through the operation of the Holy Ghost over the law of sin and death which is in his members, he cannot help communicating that victory to all the creatures

which surround him. The fruits of the Spirit are produced in the understanding, which judgeth by the sense; they are produced also in the sense; and how shall they terminate there, and not extend to the creatures with which the sense holdeth continual communion? The gentleness which the Spirit worketh will extend itself to the creatures, towards whom it will be humanity and mercy: the decency and order which the Spirit delighteth in, will shew itself towards the creatures in all good husbandry and beautiful assortments: the temperance which the Spirit worketh in every sense will place bounds to our enjoyment, and prevent the creatures from being degraded and misused by excess, and will work economy in all quarters; the joy of heart and cheerful hospitality which the Spirit worketh, will prevent all niggardly hoardings of the creature, and avaricious covetings of it; and, in one word, every talent which God hath given unto man for redressing, redeeming, and ruling over, and blessing the inferior creatures, having yet to be called into account by God, who suffers no hiding of it, but requireth it to be profitably employed, will put forth its activity and power under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, in order to accomplish that good ministry unto all things for which it was originally given, and hath since been redeemed. And the eye is sanctified to the perception of heavenly beauty, before whose purified vision the concealed heaven on earth is unveiled, and all things make mention to it of God. God, who by faith is discovered, is by the holy eye recognised in all things: and it discourseth largely over the creatures concerning the perfection of God, and the workmanship of God the Creator of all things; yea, and the tokens of Christ the Redeemer of all things are dimly perceived beneath the veils of sense; and I may say that the sense of sight, that best interpreter of the visible, is made subservient to the interpreting Spirit of God. And the ear is hallowed to hear the sound of the Creator and the Redeemer's praise, in all sounds which are heard on the surface of the world; the songs of birds, and the lowing of the cattle; the roarings of the young lions, which seek their meat from God; all storms and tempests, and raging winds, whose violence is restrained of God, do speak into the ear of the spiritual man the glory of God. The rainbow

in the heavens telleth of His covenant of peace, and the raging of the sea declareth His power, who saith, "Hitherto shall ye come, and here shall your proud waves be stayed." Everything is sanctified, every creature of God is made good by the sanctification of the holy word, and the dedication of devout prayer. War itself is made holy, and the man of war is converted into a minister of the holy purposes of God. The whole machinery of Divine providence is explained; the mystery of the present dispensation is unfolded; and with the liberty of the Holy Spirit, which expresseth itself in the Psalms and the Prophets, the man of divine wisdom is enabled to expatiate over all the elements and over all the creatures, and to sing, as it is written in Ps. civ., and in many other psalms, of whose comfortable use the spiritual Church availeth herself but little in this her shrivelled dotage, "The glory of the Lord shall endure for ever: the Lord shall rejoice in his works. He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth; he toucheth the hills, and they smoke. I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have my being. My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the Lord."

III. I now come to the third department of man's business and occupation under the sun, which he holdeth with his fellow-men, in their various relations of kindred, neighbours, and fellow-creatures; and in their various stations with respect to himself, of inferiors, superiors, and equals; into which I would now inquire, with the view of shewing how, by our honest and upright travail therein, and the righteous use of the talents which God hath given to us for the occupation thereof, we do conciliate God's favour towards us, and prepare a soil for receiving the seed of the word, when it may please the Husbandman to sow it, or, if it be already sown, do feed the soil and keep it in good heart and quality.

1. The first and fundamental relation of man to man, is the domestic, in its various degrees of husband and wife, parent and child, brother and sister, outward to every ramification; the wider the better; the more minute, the more pious and honourable. Upon the right honest fulfilment and occupation

of which more dependeth in the way of producing a good soil for the word of God, than upon all the things which have yet been mentioned. They talk like fools, who would postpone family bonds to friendly and sentimental attachments; and they talk like emissaries of Satan, who would undervalue parents for enforcing a discipline of knowledge, and of action, and, above all, of obedience upon the child, lest forsooth they should cramp the liberty of nature. What do they mean by that word, "liberty of nature?" I know what liberty of will means; but of nature I have no notion, but as a bondage upon the natural liberty of the will: so that all they do by the sufferance and endurance of childhood and youth, is to permit time to rivet the bonds, and iniquity to confirm and deepen the darkness into which we are all by nature brought. Not, however, deeming these moping sentimentalists worthy the expenditure of good sense, I cannot enough admire, nor could have believed, did I not know it for certain, that many pious people are so far overseen in this matter, as to believe and act upon the faith, that because they cannot change the heart, nor lead the mind to Jesus, nor in any other way bear a part in the work of their children's salvation, it is of little avail to distress either them or themselves with laborious painstakings; and it is wicked to think that they can by all their efforts bring them a jot nearer to Christ. All this Antinomian speculation and practice, which goes to a great height with your Sandemanians and Bereans, cometh, dear brethren, of this capital defect in their theology; that they know not, or believe not, that there is a soil, as well as a Sower of seed, and a Waterer of seed, and a Husbandman;—which soil is in man, is in the heart of man;—which soil is looked to by God, and because of its worthiness is honoured with His cultivation, and made fruitful of His harvest. To the formation of which soil, I say again, nothing under heaven contributes so essentially as the right training and good breeding of a father's house, by cultivating in the child many excellent qualities of the mind and heart, whereof by far the best is faith, or a simple reliance upon the word of its parents, and an undoubting confidence in their affection. And next to this is a reverence of their authority, and an implicit obedience of their commands.

To believe, to revere, and to obey, are the three highest faculties and functions of man, and the three most necessary requisites towards the receiving and fructifying of the divine seed, which must be believed, and revered, and obeyed, in order to bring forth any fruit. These are the three elements of an honest heart: the belief that other men are honest and true, the reverence of all men in their proper place, and the ready obedience of every obligation which they have over us. And, on the other hand, to doubt, and suspect, and be jealous of others, to believe nothing, or as little as possible, beyond what we see; and, which comes of such scepticism, to have no reverence of any man for his rank or authority; and to serve as little as possible, and escape whenever we can into the idleness and liberty of our own will;—these are the three scourges of man's soul, which utterly disqualify him from receiving any divine seed. For they all come of Satan, who is a liar and a murderer: for what is scepticism and doubt, but the suspicion of a lie? and what is irreverence, but the murdering of another man's dignity? and disobedience, but rebellion against his word? Now, it may well be said, that if we believe not, revere not, and obey not our parents which are on earth, how shall we believe, revere, or obey our Father which is in heaven? Wherefore, brethren, I do exhort you the more diligently to give heed unto your children, especially in these times, which are unbelieving to the very core, and irreverent to the last degree, that you may lay in them, from their infancy, the rudiments of these three excellent endowments. And, to that effect, never deal falsely with your children on any pretence; joke not with them, mock not with them, give in to no extravagance with them; but keep to the bare and naked truth; until your word, your look, your simplest sign becomes an equivalent to truth: and let truth be ever in their ears, and let truth be ever in their eyes. And yield not your august authority, a father to become a play-mate, a mother to become an idle-hour companion. These offices pertain to brothers and sisters, and companions of the like age, and are profitable to them. But once let the reverence for a father be lost, and reverence is for ever gone; and can hardly ever be reclaimed again. Be authority an ingre-

dient of everything you say, that obedience may become an ingredient of everything they receive. Go not to simper and smile affection, to prattle and bandy baby-talk to your children; go not to level everything down to their understanding. Put out of the house that swarm of infantine science, and infantine criticism, and infantine story, and infantine catechisms, and infantine hymns and spiritual songs, which keep children for ever children, which sacrifice faith at the shrine of understanding, and that the understanding of a child, which abolish reverence and obedience from the mind, where above all it ought to be seated. And, oh! ye foolish fathers and fond mothers, who delight to hear your children asking reasons of you for every command before they will yield it faith or obedience, you are destroying their very capacity for Divine teaching; unfitting them for hearing God, and preparing them for that scepticism which rageth amongst us like a pestilence, sparing neither sex nor age. 'Suffer all questions which are expressive of their ignorance, and with reverence asked at your superior knowledge; and answer all such according to your best ability, directing them besides to the reverend sources of knowledge in the holy word of God, and the writings of the wise and faithful of His Church. But questions which originate in disinclination to believe, and unwillingness to obey; in conceit of mind, and a desire of self-determination; suffer not in a child, and in a man discourage. It was wont to be the rule amongst our fathers, "Do my bidding, and ask no reasons. Obey!" "And why should I obey?" "Because your father or your mother hath commanded you." I have seen a mother stand by while a father quelled with sore correction the obstinacy of a child, and turn away her face and weep, but never interfere with word or sign, because she knew it was wholesome discipline. I knew a widowed mother well, who was in the use of taking the offender away from the rest into a secret chamber alone; and then, after shewing him how it grieved her, and degraded him, chasten him with her own hand; and yield her rod neither to the declaration of repentance nor the promise of amendment. But our children now-a-days are become parents, and babes rule over us: men and women of the old school

there are none; nor teachers, who must by no means dare to chastise our children, but may scare them with dark chambers, and load them with petty penalties. The play of the world's addresses must be introduced into the school: knaves must be set to detect knaves; the pillory, the public disgrace, excommunication, and every other art must be introduced to supplement the schoolmaster's bereaved office. And trials by jury, and the mockery of everything reverential among men, must be played off with the children. And no servant can now be entrusted with the good and salutary discipline of a child, but they must address them by the title of Master and Miss, and treat them as their superiors. Why, look ye, take it for all in all, and I will say, there never was such a system contrived in this foolish world for scourging the soil of the heart, as that which now prevails in the education and training of children; which prepares them for all intellectual scepticism, and self-willedness, and disqualifies them utterly for receiving or reproducing the precious seed of the word of God;—of all which I solemnly warn parents, and do entreat them, if they have ever believed anything, to believe this word; and if ever they gave reverence to anything I have spoken as a minister of Christ, to give reverence to this lesson of training their children to believe, to reverence, and to obey, in every thought, word, and action of their life, whatever is to be believed, revered, and obeyed; of which you, not they, are to be the judges.

And, on the other hand, I have to say of children, that if this part of their education have been neglected, they should seek with all their might to recover the loss which they have sustained, by observing the desires, honouring the persons, and giving reverence to the authority of their parents. And though our parents be not able nor willing to sustain *their* place, being spoiled in the midst of the evil days; we ought to keep *our* place, which is that of dutiful children, and not by any means suffer ourselves to enter into argument with them; as little as possible to perceive their ignorance and never to expose it. If there be anything for which I prize the manners and habits of our native Scotland more than another, it is for that observance and obedience of

our parents to which we are trained; the silence which we are taught to keep in the presence of our elders; the absence of all interchange of jest and raillery between age and youth; the discouragement of all forwardness to give an opinion, or even to open our mouth, in the presence of the generation which is above us; with all the other parts of the discipline of children, which far more than the parish-school hath contributed to the formation of our national character. Now, you know how few books we live on; no libraries for the people, no nursery-rhymes for children; but the Assembly's Catechism for the fathers, and perhaps the Mother's Catechism for the mothers, to teach by; the Book of Proverbs, our metrical Psalms, and the Bible. These are, or rather were wont to be, the children's books of Scotland, licensed by the authority of our fathers and mothers. The national ballads and legends were left to be picked up from the mouths of others: and for other books there was no restraint; but they were always men's books, not children's books. After the horn-book, containing the mystery of the alphabet, of syllables, and of points, there was just one step into the Single Catechism; which used to be printed, so as to contain upon one page all the preliminaries and prerequisites to its perusal, from the alphabet upwards. But I return, from the sweet contemplation of days gone by, to the instruction of my people upon that which concerns the days we live in.

2. The relationship which cometh next into view, as preparatory for the Christian husbandry, is that of brother and sister; which is the proper discipline of equal love and mutual attachment, where no interest nor worldly motives intermingle: the former being preparatory of our relation as children unto God; this being preparatory of our relation as brethren unto the other children of God, and the Church of Christ. In order to the growth of which, parents should guard themselves against partiality, and prevent their children from everything which might foster selfishness. Their diversity of natural gifts and tempers will always be enough to excite discord and disagreement: against which it is the very design of a common parentage, a common house, a common name, a common kindred, to work an effectual check. A father's

justice and equity must stand umpire in all their quarrels; and a father's righteous severity must chastise the offender, even though the offended should plead his cause. A father's wisdom must study their several talents, and appropriate to them their several occupations corresponding thereto: they should be taught to labour, when they can labour, not for themselves, but for the little community which laboured for them. No separate purse, no separate interest, should be permitted under their father's roof; and when the time cometh that they go forth to serve another master, they should be taught that their first care is not for themselves, but for the family whereof they now are members. Nor should the feeling of family unity be suffered to leave them when they are doing for themselves, and have a house and family of their own. Still they should remember their father's house, and their father's name, and be helpful to it for ever. I consider that this island, which is so signally favoured in its institutions, hath no mean blessing, amongst others, in the institution of clanship which exists in the north, and is as honourable to the domestic character of Scotland, as is the trial by jury to the judicial character of England. I never yet have found but that a religious family was remarkably united in itself, and sought about to trace out the scattered fragments of the stock from which it came. Whence I conclude, that this long remembrance of kindred, and distant ramification of it, is a good characteristic of any people, and to be carefully preserved as another defence against the selfishness of our peculiar and proper nature. Into the subdivision of these domestic relationships I cannot enter particularly; and therefore must observe, in general, that a father and a mother have a duty to discharge, not only to their children, but to their children's children, to the furthest generation which they are permitted to see; and, in faith and prayer, and the other offices of invisible affection, they have a duty to discharge to their utmost posterity. And a brother and a sister have duties to discharge, not to their own children only, but to all the children of their common father; and of their father's brethren, and of their father's name. And the more this gentle intercommunion of affection and cheap interchange of mutual love is fostered in private in a family, the

more will it be prepared for entering into the mystery of the Church of Christ, and sympathising with the manifold conditions, and helping the manifold wants, of her various members. Therefore it is called the household of faith; and the members of it are called brethren; and Christ, our Elder Brother, the first-born of the house, and heir of all. Which shews us that the privilege of the first-born is also a venerable ordinance, which God hath honoured, and which in all Christian kingdoms hath been established by the sanction of law. All these are types, in the natural constitution of things, most profitable for enabling the reason of man to recognise its own well-being and consolation in the doctrines and ordinances of the gospel.

3. The next relation to which we come in the course of things, is that of a servant to a master; which it is good for every man to have passed through: and, instead of envying any one who has been always his own master, I do the rather pity him therefore. I love the discipline of a school for children; and I love the discipline of a shop for young tradesmen, and of a mistress over young women; of heads of houses over students; of masters over apprentices; of doctors over scholars, and guardians over minors: I revere all the forms of indentures and apprenticeships, and the taking up their freedoms of guilds and city companies; and I admire the principle which prevailed with our fathers, to think that those who took upon them the discipline of their sons or daughters were not enough rewarded by their services, but ought to have some good consideration for their pains. This shews that they not only thought it good for every freeman to pass through the probation of a servant; but that they were beholden in some consideration to the master who would break them into obedience, and instruct them in the mystery of his craft or learning. For how otherwise shall a man be fit to be a servant of the whole Church of Christ; to minister unto the wants of the needy, to wash the saints' feet, to bring a cupful of cold water unto the little children of the Lord? How shall we honour our Master in heaven, if we honour not our master on earth? Truly I can say, from experience, it is both a sweet and an honourable thing to be a servant, and most needful to prepare one for being a master. Yea, I can say that it is sweet to lay

down the cares of a master, and enter into the obedience of a servant. Would that this were better understood and more felt by masters and by servants, in order that they might not grieve and grudge one against another, but honour each other in their several places, and fulfil their common duties, when they see the good, and feel the pleasure of them, wholly irrespective of the hire and wages; for a servant is not a hireling, but one who is intrusted with a charge, be it of our property, of our children, of our house, or of some other thing which we cannot ourselves tend. But, alas! how few servants are there in these days, and how many hirelings! how few masters over men and women, how many paymasters! and because of this, there is so little reverence of the ordinances of the Lord's Church; for there is no soil upon which the plant may grow. The soil wants this quality, and it will not fructify this kind. Witness how little reverence of the office of a minister, or of an elder, or of a deacon, there commonly is now-a-days; how little reverence of a Presbytery, or a Synod, or General Assembly of the Church, or of the authority of the Church itself, from the members of the Church: and, on the other hand, witness how little of affectionate care, painstaking instruction, hearty encouragement, and good counsel there is from those above to those beneath. Who says now, "I would rather be a door-keeper in the house of God, than a dweller in the tents of sin?" We are rather come into the condition mentioned by the prophet: "Which of us will shut a door for nought?"

4. The next relation into which we are brought in the ordinary course of things, is that of husband and wife, which becomes the nourishment and support of all the rest: and well worthy it is of the last and highest consideration; for it is the most ancient of all, instituted by God himself, pre-existent in paradise, and therefore most holy, and sanctified by the Holy Spirit to be the great symbol of the communion of Christ and His Church. And the man who understandeth to cherish his wife as he ought to do, in the midst of all her weaknesses and infirmities, and never but in love to rebuke her, and with long-suffering to bear patiently with her, and in spite of all her faults to love her, and to desire no other, but in everything, to the look of the eye, to be faithful to her,

that man hath prepared in him a soil for receiving the word of the love of Christ unto His chosen and elected one—His spousal Church: which love of election the multitude of believers in these times will not at all regard. And, again, the woman who loveth and revereth her husband, and looketh up to him for necessary sustenance in everything pertaining to the body and the mind; who hath surrendered her identity and her very name unto her husband, and veileth her countenance in the presence of another, as belonging to him, and him only; for him reserving her beauty, and for him adorning her person, and calling him lord;—that woman hath a soil prepared within her for receiving the word of the testimony of the electing love of Christ: she hath a desire for it; no common love will satisfy her soul; it must be the love of a husband unto his wife, and of such a faithful husband as a wife may at all times resort to with the fullest assurance of a welcome and cordial return. But those spouses who take no such elevated views of the married state, nor are at pains to cultivate its reciprocal affections within their souls, or to fulfil its continual offices, are not able to apprehend the mystery of Christ and His elect Church, have no faithfulness nor constancy of affection towards Him, but are ever committing fornication and adultery with the world; beginning with gradual accommodations, and by insensible approaches advancing, until they wholly apostatise from their faithfulness. Then they will gnash upon you with their teeth if you speak to them of election: they will call it cruelty and blasphemy, and a dishonouring of God's love, which should be general and alike to all. This is exactly the state to which we are come; it is called adultery in the spirit; and, believe me, it will go hand in hand with adultery in the letter, as may be seen in all the Papal States. And why? Because wherever the fulness of the love which there is between husband and wife is comprehended; and the necessity of it to the well-being of the family, and the well-being of the society; then will the heart yearn for something of the same fulness in the love of God and of Christ, and feel assured that not otherwise can the fruitfulness of children and the well-being of the family be maintained. I say, that what place the concentrated affection of husband

and wife upon one another hath with respect to the fruitfulness and blessedness of the family; that same hath the doctrine of election, or choice of preference and intercommunion of love, to the fruitfulness and blessedness of the Church;—which, by preserving upon the earth the reality of these symbols in the constitution of society, doth interpret the mystery, enlarge the knowledge, and increase the use of them; which again produceth a soil for receiving the seed of the word; and thus, exactly in the way which we explained above with respect to agriculture, do they act and react upon one another.

Having thus gone over the relationships of the family, and shewn how they serve the interests of the Church, and are, as it were, the outward court of the temple of God, we do now proceed to the relationships of neighbourhood. By neighbours are meant those beside whom God in His providence hath cast our lot. But it may be asked, Are not all men our neighbours? and when it is said, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," is it not meant of all men? I answer with our Lord, in the parable of the Samaritan, that the word "neighbour," in the commandment, includeth our very enemies, and is intended to take in all men; so that, wherever among the habitations of men we may find ourselves, we are required to love them as ourselves. Nevertheless, there is a great appropriateness, and I would say a most precious mystery, couched in the word "neighbour:" which is, that we ought not to send our affections posting over the wide world, and, as it were, a wool-gathering, into all parts where men are to be found;—one of the fallacies and mischiefs of their modern philosophy, which would break up the little companies, and fellowships, townships, communities, and kingdoms of men; in order, as they say, to constrain with an equal arm, and entreat with an equal affection, the whole family of mankind. This is the basis of what they call political justice, which attempted to rear its head against the Christian institutions of this island some thirty years ago. Against this the word "neighbour," in the commandment, beareth witness; by choosing which it is signified that we should begin, and be busy with, the near at hand, circulate how wide soever we can go; missing no one

in the widening of our circle, and not failing to love them with a love equal to that with which we love ourselves. This is the practical and working form of the law: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself;" and the general principle of the law is, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye also unto them." This is a great province of a Christian's duty, without which that love of the elect, and devoted attachment to the household of faith, would work all the evil consequences which the Arminians, in their blindness, seek to discover in it. And, therefore, besides the relationship of kindred, which may furnish the soil for that new commandment of Christ, "that we should love one another, as He hath loved us," we should have a relationship of neighbourhood, in order to furnish the soil for that old commandment of the law, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself:" of which I now entreat, as being of an importance second only to that family relationship which I have handled above.

This relationship of neighbour to neighbour, includes in it all community of whatever kind; for every kind of community, from that of a copartnery in trade up to the society of a kingdom, groweth out of it: and all the laws, rules, and ordinances of townships, cities, counties, and kingdoms, are the effort of reason in its natural bondage, to establish and effect the building, and bear up the burden of this very commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself;" which I hold to be as certainly the basis and support of all communities, as that the law of gravitation, inversely as the squares of the distances, is the basis of the system of the material heavens. For take thought and consider what all interchange of commodities is grounded on, and what it tendeth to produce in men who uprightly conduct it. Is it not grounded upon the principle, that there shall be an equal rule maintained unto all men, and that we shall treat our neighbour with the same measure with which we treat ourselves? And is not every departure from this accounted fraud and unrighteousness? And what is the nature of law? Is it not to reduce all men to a level, before the principles of equity? Not to level men to one condition; but, while chartering every one in his proper condition, to take care that therein he do no violence to the

law of neighbourly love. Law cannot make love: it maketh fear; and by its fearful sanctions can prevent equity from being infringed on. If you will consider human society in all its relations, you will find that it seeks, in the first place, to lay the foundation-stone in the law of the neighbour, and thereon to rear its gorgeous temple of people, powers, potentates, and dominions; honouring men in their several stations, but not suffering them to do each other wrong. The judge, the representative of righteous law and even-handed justice, sitteth every day, hearing causes between our sovereign lord the king and the prisoner at the bar. And therein standeth the highest dignity of our king, that he is the chief magistrate, the supreme judge, and the fountainhead of mercy also. But it is needless to insist longer upon this point: only, I repeat it broadly, against all the selfish philosophers, that not self-interest, but love of our neighbour, is the bond of all civil society; yea, and the principle which society doth constantly exemplify; and that selfishness is the corruption and rottenness of society.

Now, observe how the good citizen, the upright merchant, the fair-dealing trader, in the walks of everyday duty, do prepare a soil for bearing unto God the fruit of that second commandment of the law, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." I do not say that it can implant the principle of love; on the other hand, it worketh fear; but that it doth prevent men, by all the sanctions of law and good name, of honour and riches, and present well-being, from transgressing the commandment in an open way; from practising dishonesty, or giving ear to the temptations of fraud; yea, and it doth breed a high sense and feeling of honour, a regard for honesty, and desire of the esteem of good men, which are most favourable and predispose us to the reception of that commandment of God which perfects it into a heavenly principle, requiring that it be done from that principle of divine love and disinterested bounty, which is exemplified in the rising of the sun upon the evil and the good, and the sending of "the rain upon the just and the unjust," and in its fulness is displayed in the giving of His only-begotten Son for a lost and ruined world. That word of God, "Love thy neighbour as

thyself," doth include the substance of all law, honest rules, and customs of exchange; as the light which was in Christ includes the light which is in the reason of fallen man; and, including, it hath a love and favour for it, such as Christ had for His own fallen children. And as the world, and the fallen humanity of man, were the proper soil for casting the seed of redemption into, so do I argue all along through this discourse, of these natural institutions of human life, that they who reverence and observe them are the fit soil for fructifying the word which Christ hath preached for the redemption of man. And I, moreover, believe, that in proportion as the members of Christ's Church lose this high and honourable feeling of justice and honesty in all their transactions, they will lose the capacity of bearing that kind of fruit unto the glory of God which springeth from the love of our neighbour as ourselves. The one reacts upon the other. When we begin to be faithless with respect to the mammon of unrighteousness, God begins to take away from us the true riches. I do not inquire where this reciprocal action beginneth; yet, if I were called upon to give an opinion, I would say, in the soil,—because the virtues of the seed are indestructible; and the watering influences of the Holy Spirit are not withdrawn out of change, but drunk up by the barren sand of the soil, or by the evil genius of the soil perverted to the nourishment only of thorns, briers, and thistles; which kind is declared by the apostle to be nigh unto burning.

5. I have one thing more to add, before concluding this head of discourse. That every one of these good provisions, made by the God of providence in the constitution of the world for the fructification of the seed which His Son was preparing to sow, may be, yea, and is continually, perverted from their Maker's good intention and purpose by the perverseness of man, in appropriating them to the nourishment of his own pride and self-sufficiency: and being so perverted, they nourish nothing but rebellion against God, indifference to Christ, and independence on His Holy Spirit. The love of children to their parents, how often doth it become conceit of their good name, or delight in their high and honourable station! The love of spouses, how often doth it become idolatry! The love

of family, how often doth it become clannish pride, and overweening fondness! And so also how often do companies, townships, cities, and kingdoms, forgetting the love of equality and the law of neighbourly love, out of which they arose, become the fountains of envy, vain-glory, party-spirit, war, and bloodshed! But this is the transgression of these good institutions of God, and their apostasy from the purpose and intention of the Creator; for which they shall be judged. Hath God then, in all His providence, made no provision against this tendency of man to become proud, and boast himself in his possessions; to become self-sufficient and unkind, narrow-minded and uncharitable? I answer, that He hath in a most remarkable way provided the means of discountenancing and destroying this ungenerous, ungracious principle, and creating a soil for the production of humility, reverence, and bountiful regard unto all; which is the last thing in the constitution of man's social condition of which I would treat. This check and restraint is found in the diversity of the orders, and ranks, and abilities, and gifts of men, which are so essential an ingredient of human existence, that if you were to break it all down to-morrow, before to-morrow ended it would begin to grow apace. For it is founded by God in the very constitution of men. Reverence of a superior, and kindness to an inferior, are as essential to the being and the well-being of a man, as is justice and equity to an equal. And why? Because man was made to reverence God, and to exercise merciful sway over the creatures? And how should he do the one or the other, without a principle of reverence and condescension implanted in his breast? And is not man himself split into two parts; man for condescending love, woman for reverent love? And these split again into parents and children; parents for authoritative love, children for obedient love? How then should it otherwise be, than that these the principles and properties of our nature should have a representation in the ordinances and institutions of the society which we compose? Yea, God obligeth it: for one man cannot be all things.—But I am not going to reason these things out, as if I were a lecturer in an infidel university, discoursing with great respect to an infidel class. I say, equity

is not more of the well-being of a state, nor free trade of the wealth of a state, than diversity of rank is of the existence of a state. Equality is pride. Liberty, with equality, is licentiousness. Oh! let us not envy; let us, like wise men, pity the republics of the west, which would cut off precedence, and nobility, and royalty, in order to conduct government by hire. Oh! oh! how little do they know of the nature of man, how little do they know of the providence and grace of God, in the permission, yea, in the establishment of all these things! These are the restraints against that very self-sufficiency, and pride of man, which turns the milk of human kindness into the sourness of malice and indifference, which breaks in upon the relative duties of servant and master, of tenant and landlord, of laity and nobility, of people and prince, of nation and king. They are the continual nourishment of reverence to a superior: they cultivate the principle of worship, which ever fights against the principle of selfishness; they are alone capable of holding pride in check, and keeping the mind open to charity and love, which pride freezeth up. Like everything else, it will go to excess, and engender knee-worship, and hat-reverence, and every form of sycophancy. But laugh not these things to scorn: they are of a better nest than are arrogancy, and plebeianism, and slanderous contempt of a superior: they are good plants run to seed; which nevertheless came out of a good bed. And here I cannot help recalling to the mind of many who are able to judge, how much sweeter, gentler, and opener to light, and to affection, the reverential spirit of the Scottish peasantry, and of the well-instructed part of the English peasantry, preserveth their souls, than doth the levelling, equalising, all-censuring, and all-judging spirit of our manufacturing people, taught in newspaper lore; those political statesmen, no longer choosing to be called peasantry, but operative classes. What a difference there is between these two characters! the character of a thoughtful reverent peasant, and the character of these self-sufficient loquacious fellows with whom our manufacturing towns are filled. Which cometh chiefly of this, that the one revereth all men in their places, and honoureth especially those to whose care the welfare of a nation is committed, is humble in his ideas of himself, never

dreams of being able to judge those above him, to dispute it with a man of learning, or doctor of the Church, to handling state questions, or sit in judgment upon kings: to all which, and much more, the other thinking himself quite equal, becometh vainer and more empty than the peacock; chattereth like the magpie, and, like the mocking-bird, sitteth all day long mocking and mimicking every fowl of a deeper and sweeter song. This irreverence is the beginning of pride, pride the parent of cruelty, and cruelty of all destructiveness; while, on the other hand, reverence of a superior in place, in person, in mind, in honour, and in dignity, is the beginning of meekness, of humility, of docility, and of every gracious disposition. Nor is there any one thing against which this nation, against which mankind have now more to be on their guard; no one thing which is so effectually scourging the soil of the world, and making it spew forth the seed of the word; which is so selling men to infidelity, and binding them over under strong indentures to Satan, as this spirit of irreverence, which in the region of the mind is called criticism and reviewing; which in the region of politics is called radicalism; and in the region of the Church, thinking for one's self, where it produceth what is commonly called personal, but is in truth selfish, religion—that is, no religion, but the religious esteem of ourselves.

Thus have I sought to carry you through the whole field of social life, to point out the ingredients of it, and teach you how each hath a virtue in it to become the soil of some religious plant: and altogether to produce that vineyard of good grapes, that field of productive seed, that bed of roses, and garden of perfumes, of myrrh and cassia and frankincense, which the Church of Christ ought to be. It is in this, as in natural husbandry: after you have taken a crop of one kind, it may be wheat or any other grain, the soil will hardly bear another of that kind, because the quality which maketh it proper for that seed is exhausted, and it must be allowed to strengthen itself; but very likely it will bear another of barley, and after that another of vetches, and so on throughout a rotation, which, being well conducted, may be continued for a long time. Even so, a church, being com-

posed of every class,—masters and servants, parents and children, gentlemen and common people,—will, if every one be diligent to occupy his place and station after a religious sort, be ever productive unto God, and will not cease from a perpetual round of spiritual and heavenly offerings: but if we become contumacious in our places; heads of families fondly indulgent, children undutiful, spouses distracted from their mutual loves; servants disobedient, or masters wicked; governors unjust, or people irreverent and ungrateful: then, be it known unto you, that though I could preach like Paul or Apollos, it were in vain. There is not soil for the seed to take root in; there lacketh the honest and worthy heart to receive it into: which I cannot give, which God giveth, and that not abruptly, but by His ordinances of human life, which are very venerable, and which He will reverence, neglect them who will. Wherefore I do exhort you to give good and reverent heed to those things which I have spoken, as being things most necessary to be preached by every minister, and to be kept in mind by every member of the Church of Christ. We ought to be lamps, burning and shining lights, above the brightness of ordinary men. We ought to honour all these offices, and magnify them, not merely implement them. We who are Christ's saved ones, ought to be saviours unto others: we who are Christ's redeemed ones, ought to lead others into our redemption. They, seeing our light, should take knowledge of us, that we belong to Christ, and give glory to our Father which is in heaven. Oh, then, labour, for the Lord's sake, to follow after these things! "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and may your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

IV. We have shewn, under the three former heads, the light of life which dimly appeareth amid the darkness of nature in the vegetable and animal creation, and in the constitution of

human society; and we have endeavoured to point out how the reason of man, fallen and oppressed as it is, may discourse to great profit and advantage over all those regions of God's providence, and teach the understanding and constrain the sense, so wisely and temperately to use the service and the accommodation of all these the handiworks of God, as shall be well-pleasing in the sight of the Lord, and work within ourselves such a kindly and generous disposition, such a good and honest heart, as will be ready to receive the seed of the word sown therein; and, by the blessing of God, bring forth thirty, forty, fifty, or even a hundredfold. But there is yet another, and a much higher means of this preparatory grace of a good soil—namely, the reverent observance of all God's appointed ordinances, or the right use of the visible Church, into which we come now, in dependence upon Divine grace, to inquire. This last head of discourse includeth all the others, and addeth, to the sanction of reason, the more awful sanction of the revealed will of God, teaching and commanding us to observe all those rules of temperance; and to preserve all those feelings of superiority towards the inanimate creatures, to deal mercifully by, and help on the redemption of, the lower animals, and reverently to observe and to honour all our fellow-men, in their places and relations, as superiors, inferiors, or equals. And therefore we might now travel over all that ground again, and reinforce all our positions with the additional authority of the Church, and unanswerable verdict of the word of God: but from this we forbear, being rather minded to open fresh ground, and to take up some new positions in this great argument.

1. Concerning the ordinances of Divine appointment, it is to be observed, first, that they are all written in the Holy Scriptures, which are the word of God, and therefore towards the observance of these ordinances the faith and veneration of that holy book must mainly conduce: and this is therefore the first thing we have to take into consideration, the testimonies of the written word, which, little as we do prize the book, is as much the handwriting of the Lord as were those tables of stone which Moses broke upon the Mount of Sinai. And how precious the Lord esteemed the written law, He well did signify,

by requiring the ten words engraven on stone to be laid up in the ark of the covenant for ever; and what price He set upon the obedience of the Books of Moses, and what awful issues did derive from the neglect of the same, is well shewn by these words which Huldah the prophetess spake unto the messengers of the good king Josiah, concerning the book of the law which had just been found:—"And she said unto them, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Tell the man that sent you to me, Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, even all the words of the book which the king of Judah hath read: because they have forsaken me, and have burnt incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the works of their hands; therefore my wrath shall be kindled against this place, and shall not be quenched. But to the king of Judah which sent you to inquire of the Lord, thus shall ye say to him, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, As touching the words which thou hast heard; because thine heart was tender, and thou hast humbled thyself before the Lord, when thou heardest what I spake against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, that they should become a desolation and a curse, and hast rent thy clothes, and wept before me; I also have heard thee, saith the Lord. Behold therefore, I will gather thee unto thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered into thy grave in peace; and thine eyes shall not see all the evil which I will bring upon this place," (2 Kings xxii. 15-20.) The like say we concerning the sacred canon, which, blessed be the Lord, every one now possesseth, and readeth in his mother tongue. Be assured that the use or the abuse of that book,—the belief or the disbelief of its marvellous records, the meditation or neglect of its wisdom, the obedience or disobedience of its commandments, the receiving or rejecting of its doctrines concerning the state of nature and of grace,—must work an effect of good or evil upon the heart, beyond all other causes whatever, and go either to deepen and improve, or to waste and scourge the soil. For, where God's most precious words of truth have become indifferent to the heart, perhaps odious to the very hearing of a man, what a state it proves him to be in, and how very far from the king-

dom of heaven! And when we have time for all manner of converse with our family, our friends, and neighbours, but none for converse with the word of God, how engrossed with base preferences, and how abject in our desires it proveth us to be! And what miserable masters it proveth us to be enthralled unto, and how delighted with their bondage, when, for the word of redemption and divine recovery from death, we have no ear at all!

The word of God, I make no doubt therefore, is both a great preparation for the sower, and its estimation is a true witness to him of those who are worthy of his seed, and of those who are worthless. I am not now speaking of the word of God when it hath begun to quicken; for then it becometh seed, not soil: "The seed is the word of God." I am speaking of it while as yet it is food to the understanding of the mind, a delight to the feelings of the heart, and a guide to the unrenewed will of man; the support of a good character, the rule of a moral life; the great basis of truth and morals, of laws and customs; such as we have experienced it to be unto all, even the unregenerate, of this island, and especially in the northern parts of it, for the last two centuries. And of its effects I will say, that all the books which have been written, and all the traditions which are not written, but live from mouth to mouth, are but as a drop in the bucket, when compared with the Scriptures, in restraining the wickedness of the natural man, and permitting the oppressed reason to bring forth those fruits of wisdom and worth to which in itself it is equal. The light of truth which speaketh in the Holy Scriptures, the weight of wisdom with which every part of it is burdened, the lineaments of manly beauty which shine in its examples, the marvellous might of God's manifold doings, and the sublime majesty with which He is clothed, all the stupendous acts of judgment, and the yet more stupendous acts of mercy; the perfect comprehension which the word of God hath of manhood, and the truth, the manifest truth, of all its counsels unto sinful man, the encouragement of its numerous promises, the infinitude of its rewards; the awful depth of its mysteries which swallow up the visible and the

intelligible, as it were, in a boundless abyss of meditation; and withal its perfect plainness, and straightforward intention, and application to all practical things, and every-day occurrences;—these grand peculiarities, and others of the like character, do give to the Holy Scriptures, merely considered as a book for storing up the gifts of reason, and educing the good of the present life, such an immense superiority over all other books, that I do wonder with exceeding great admiration, how any parent or schoolmaster, lawgiver or magistrate, or any other intrusted with the care and well-being of immortal souls, should stand for a moment in doubt concerning their duty to make it the basis of all their undertakings and the guide of all their endeavours.

For my own part, I, as a minister of Christ, having my commission from the great Head of the Church, and my standing under one of the ancient establishments of this land, do exhort all to make no tarrying, if you have not already begun, to read the word of God every day in the hearing of your assembled household, men, women, and children; and to require a strict observance and obedience of all its statutes, conforming yourselves diligently thereto: and though it be not yours to touch the heart, or to quicken the seed, rest assured that you will be blessed to produce the lower fruits of reason, which God doth not disregard—soundness and health of mind, honesty of heart, subordination of the will, correct judgments of men, charitable ways of thinking and feeling concerning things, right dispositions, and an upright walk and conversation. And you cannot conceive what delicacy, yet freedom of intercourse between young men and young women, what chastity, yet liberty of discourse, what self-command, and self-restraint, what playfulness of wit, and sportiveness of fancy, and cheerful humours of the mind spring up in the bosom of a people whose hot and violent passions are brought and kept under subjection by the fear of God, and reverence of His holy word. These, I allow, are not fruits from heaven, but from earth: they belong to the fallen reason, not to the quickened spirit; yet are they good in their kind, though not fit for the garner of God: and

as the lichen, and the moss, and the blades of grass, which, by oft growing and oft decaying, do at length cover the face of the rock with such a depth of vegetable mould as maketh it apt to produce wheat, and oats, and barley, for the use of man; so, by the much producing of their fruits of honesty, purity, morality, and kindness, a soil is produced of a sufficient depth and proper quality for receiving the seed of the word. And to the houses of such worthy men God sendeth sowers of the seed; and it taketh root, and the Holy Ghost watereth it, and there a fruitfulness commenceth which is to the praise and the glory of our Father in heaven. Do not, therefore, in the training of your children and your households, weary in your patience, or fall from your steadfastness, because you see no fruit of Divine grace, but go on doing what man can do, and praying for what God only can give, resting assured that in due time ye shall reap if ye faint not.

2. Next to the diligent use of God's word, I place the converse and communion, the living voice and visible actions of His Church. I do not mean the ordinances of public worship, of which I have not yet come to speak, but our daily intercourse with those who fear the Lord, and are, so far as man can judge, walking in His covenant; the saints, the excellent ones of the earth, those who bear the vessels of the Lord: amongst whom I place, first, the ministers of the gospel; to whose discourse in private, as well as in public, you ought to give good heed,—for the lips of the priest should keep knowledge, and men should receive the law at their mouth. Next stand the rulers in God's house, who occupy the places appointed by Christ in His Church; in whom you may expect to find the grace of rule and authority and watchful care to be reposed, for the profit of the Lord's heritage: and after them, the heads of families in the congregation of the Lord's house, in whom, according to their years and gravity, you may expect the experience of the past age to be treasured up, and its wisdom to be chronicled: every man according to the gift which the Spirit hath divided unto him, and according to the office which the Head of the Church hath appointed him. Nor do I speak now of instituted offices in the house of God merely, but of the offices in the body of Christ, which are

divided among His members: to one, the lips of the eloquent; listen to him, to be aroused from your lethargy;—to another, the tongue of the learned; listen to him, to be instructed in knowledge;—to another, the mind which hath wisdom; resort to him for counsel;—to another, the eye of observation, to discover God's wonderful ways, and dealings in providence; hear him discourse of history and occurrences;—to another, the hand of liberality; observe his bounty;—to another, the gift of interpretation; let him speak to you out of the oracles of God.

This is what I mean, the right appropriation of the living Church, in the midst of which we live. For, rest assured that the Spirit is in the living creatures, more than in the dead book, which is the food to nourish their life; that life which I now entreat you to observe, and mingle with, and profit by. It is thus that you shall know the fruits of the word, and the life of God in the soul. Every faculty of life will receive its proper impulse and direction, every propensity to love and esteem our kind will receive its proper outlet. And be assured, that God will speak to your souls every day, yea, many times a day by His living Church; for His Church is the pillar and the ground of the truth. Now I can bear my testimony, that God has taught me more truth through the discourse of His living members, in all ranks, from the servant upwards, and in all classes of men, than by all other means whatever. I seldom meet with any church-member, but I am taught some important lesson from his lips, which I afterwards teach to the whole congregation: and from the ministers of the gospel, especially those who are not busy with outward visible works, for all such I find to be scourged completely out of the capacity either of receiving seed or of imparting it; but from those who are diligent in meditation, and study, and prayer, and the other works proper to our vocation of teachers and instructors,—from such I have found the greatest profit in hearing them preach and in hearing them speak. Not that I would have you to rest anything upon the authority of a man, but that you should honour the Holy Ghost in His living Church; for when any matter of thought has been originated, and a train of meditation begun, we should then betake ourselves to the Holy Scrip-

tures, in order to deliver us from the imperfection of man's teaching, and direct us into the perfection of the teaching of the Holy Ghost. I would that there did exist such a reverence among the members of Christ, one towards another, and that we did expect one to speak unto another as the oracles of God; then am I sure, there would be such a circulation of divine knowledge and wisdom amongst us, as at present we can hardly form a notion of. And without such a habitual feeling of the holiness of Christ's Church, and diligent observation of His members, and patient attention to what He speaks by their lips, I am convinced there will be little reading of the Holy Scriptures, and still less profit from reading them. Witness who they are that know the laws and rules of merchandise; are they not those who are practising traffic? Who are they that know the laws of the excise, or customs, or war? are they not they who are busy all the day in these vocations? So they, who know the doctrines and precepts of the Holy Scriptures, are those who, during the day, are conversing, and observing, and listening, and acting, as the members of Christ's Church, and with a view to His glory. Besides, what avail principles, or what profit is there of knowledge, which lieth slumbering in the heart, and speaks not, hears not, judges not? The light which God hath lighted is not to be put under a bushel, but upon a candlestick, and it giveth light to all that are in the house. If we do not look for the fruits of the gospel in one another, neither wait for the coming forth of the inward life of Christ, into the outward demonstrations of a wise, good, upright, and holy life; we do either silently accuse each other of hypocrisy, acting upon it as if we were not what we professed to be, or we do willingly countenance each other in error, and abet each other in most blame-worthy indifference to the honour and glory of God. For it is the commandment of Christ, that our speech should always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that we may know how we ought to answer every man. And again: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another, in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs; singing with grace in your hearts unto the Lord." In one word, my dear brethren, if we would observe

that constant regard to truth, which the Spirit of truth imparts and sustains; if in our dealings we would preserve that scrupulous regard to honesty which the law of God requireth, in the least as in the greatest of our actions; if in our feelings we would preserve that habitual regard to charity and love, which is the bond of perfectness; you cannot conceive what salutary effects would be wrought amongst us, how the soil would be enriched, and the capacity for receiving the seed of the word would be enlarged. And the young growing up under the influence of such an atmosphere of holiness, and wisdom, and purity, would indeed be well prepared for the preaching of the gospel, and the blessed fruits of all the ordinances of the gospel. I do entreat you to give heed to what I say, especially in your domestic, fireside, and street conversations, because there it is that Satan doth commonly steal a march upon our unguardedness, and work his wily way into our hearts, in order to prejudice them by his malice, for the receiving of the word of God, which is preached unto you from Sabbath to Sabbath. But if you would give all diligence to withstand him on these week-day and trivial occasions, if ye would "watch and pray always lest you fall into temptation," then am I assured, that the ministry of the word, and the observance of the divine ordinances on the Sabbath-day, concerning which I now come to speak, would be attended with a tenfold, yea, with a hundredfold advantage.

3. Concerning the public ordinances of religion, which we hold from Sabbath to Sabbath, I would now speak, as another of the provisions of God for preparing a soil in which the incorruptible seed may quicken and bear fruit. For of the visible Church it may be said in a far higher degree than we have affirmed of the ordinances of human life, that it is a great and universal provision of God, for training up the sense and reason of man in such a sort, as that it shall be apt for the work of the quickening Spirit. I say apt, because the parable entitles me to say so; not apt by nature, which is all averse and alien from the life of God; but rendered apt against nature, by the influence and operation of those institutions of the word and Spirit of God, which have been by them constituted and preserved for the express purpose of restraining the

wickedness of nature, and opening the eye of the heart, that it might be able to see God, when it should please Him to present Himself for an object of sight: according as it is written, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." The ordinances of the Church, I say, though intended primarily for "the Church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven," are yet of such a diffusive and blessed influence, that like the ordinances of heat and cold, light, and health, and fruitfulness, they extend with a divine generosity their good effects, even unto those who are not under their saving influence; and in them do prepare a soil, are continually preparing and renewing the soil, which doth produce unto God the peaceable fruits of righteousness. The worship of the living and the true God is so acceptable, in the midst of this world's idolatry, that the nation which setteth it up never faileth to grow great and prosperous, and to dwell safely in the face of all its enemies. They talk like fools, and enemies of their country, who talk as if it were not the duty of the government of a country to intermeddle with religion: I say that the government which will stand neutral between Christ's gospel and the Papal apostasy, or the Mohammedan imposture, or the Unitarian abomination, or other forms of antichristian doctrine, is essentially an atheistical government, which hath cast off allegiance to Christ, "The Prince of the kings of the earth," and to God who ruleth over the nations, to give them to His Son in full inheritance: and that king or government which affecteth such indifference, much more those which shew a preference to the unbelievers, will soon be cut off in the frown of God, and consumed in the hotness of His wrath. I am grieved because of the opinions which are possessing my countrymen upon this great question of statesmanship; and I foresee, if the tide of indifferency to Christ be not stemmed, we also shall "go down to the sides of the pit:" and what a fall will that be from this transcendent power and glory with which God hath encircled this little island of the sea! The Lord raise up men mighty to save. When the ordinances of God's worship are reverently conducted throughout the parishes of a land, in the face and with the consenting hearts of the assembled people, that nation will

be exalted very high: where the ordinance of preaching is in full and vigorous action, freely handling the doctrines of Christ, and largely expounding the will of God for our salvation, trying every condition of the community, and measuring every relation of man to man, by the rule of God's commandment, there will spring up such a sense of God's fear within the hearts of men, and there will descend such a blessing of God's grace from above, as will make itself to be felt and acknowledged in the experience of every one. Oh! if I were the rightful king of these realms, instead of being his free-born and loyal subject, I would have a hundred eyes over the land, to pick me up the youth whom God had blessed with large and gracious faculties. I would seek for them as for hid treasure: every schoolmaster should be at liberty to correspond with my secretaries concerning the extraordinary endowments of the mind, and every minister of the Church, concerning the extraordinary outpourings of the Spirit upon any youth; and from my own privy purse, I would have them instructed for ministers of Christ's gospel: yea, and when my purse failed, I would pawn the jewels of the crown, that the work might not slack; and, when regularly licensed to preach the gospel by the priestly stewards of that office, I would give to every one of them my royal warrant and commission, my sign manual, to go forth and preach in all corners of the kingdom, let bishop or archbishop, presbytery or synod, say what they pleased; and I would revive and extend the old motto of the city of Glasgow, "Let Great Britain flourish by the preaching of the word." And in effect, this is exactly what Edward the Sixth of blessed memory did, when he chose some fifteen or more, and gave them this large commission; of whom Bernard Gilpin was one, and, I am proud to say, John Knox was another.

For, touching the preaching of the word, you will observe, that it is not only for the sowing of the incorruptible seed of the kingdom, but for the purpose of cultivating it, and nourishing it in all possible ways, and shewing what hinders and what helps forward its fruitfulness. He has the charge of souls, and of all which souls rule over and govern. His domain is therefore co-extensive with the interests and well-being of man.

See you not then, in fulfilling this large commission, what sayings of wisdom, what maxims of prudence, what excellent rules of conduct, what expostulations of duty, and rebukes of wickedness; what examples of righteousness, and exhortations to their imitation; and, in short, what excellent and wealthy words he must ever be dropping in the ears of them that hear him: of which some have a soil for one kind and degree, others for another; and it is to be hoped, that no part or portion will fail to be received, and to produce some good fruit, though not always—alas! too seldom—the fruits of righteousness which are unto life everlasting. But inasmuch as they are good fruits, though in a lower kind, they are preparing a soil for the higher kind, if it may please the Lord to sow the seed there: and, so far forth, they are also indications of His willingness in due time to sow it. And thus the preaching of the word is the foremost of all the means which, in the hands of the Spirit, are made effectual to the propagation of the truth of the gospel, and the enlargement of the Church. And therefore is it of the utmost importance that you wait upon it with all diligence, you, and your children, and your servants, and that you give all heed to the word which is spoken, and make a point of examining into the attention which is given by your children and servants, questioning and interrogating them upon the subjects handled, and ascertaining what notes of the sermon they are able to give you. For, if a habit of inattention or formality be permitted to engender itself, then not only is shipwreck made of all these precious advantages, but a positive evil is produced, and a great offence done unto the Divine Head of the Church. And I further exhort you, that, as God hath always put such honour upon the ministry of the word, ye would be at pains to believe in the honourableness thereof, and to hope for its profit, and to pray exceedingly that it might be blessed to you and your families. For, according to the fulness of your faith, will be the fulness of the supply. For my part, I would rather have a faithful praying people to preach unto, than all be possessed of the learning and learned works of the Church, and all the talents of the most gifted son of the Church; because I believe the Holy Ghost to be a

better and more bountiful teacher than them all; who will not suffer His flock to want, and who will give to the shepherd the first offer of conveying to them the precious words upon which they may feed.

It may seem to some, who have little reflected upon this subject of the soil necessary for the sowing of the seed, a very strange thing that a minister of God's holy ordinances, who should always advocate their highest and most spiritual uses, should thus be going about to shew these secondary and inferior advantages which arise from them. But if they will consider, that I am not justifying any one for being contented with these inferior profits, but pressing them to lay hold of the highest; and that I do but teach how this soil is not produced without God, but directly by God, who also soweth the seed; and that God doth not wait for any precedent work of man, but is Himself working the work always, though in different stages of progress; they ought rather to approve the pious intention, and enter into the great importance of our discourse, which is designed to appropriate unto God the inferior, as well as the higher part of the heavenly husbandry, without confounding that which terminates in the earth, with that which never terminates but enlargeth itself to eternity. Therefore I proceed to speak of prayer and praise, which in the worship of God occupy a constant place, and are next in importance to preaching, that royal ordinance of the kingdom. My object at present not being to examine these offices of religion at large, but only to point out their influence in preparing a soil in which the seed of the word may take root and flourish, I shall not treat of them separately, but include them in one, under the head of devotion. And this, next to divine instruction, I regard as the best preparative for the work of the Holy Ghost. That there may be a devotion acceptable to God ere yet Christ hath been preached, or the Holy Ghost savingly received, is manifest from the case of Cornelius, who is described as "a just and a devout man, who feared God, and gave much alms to the poor." So also Lydia, the first-fruits of the gospel in Europe, is described as a devout woman. And it may be observed generally of those instances recorded in the Scriptures, that the seed of the word

took root in the hearts of those who were devout. Now, a devout man is one who reverenceth the name, and practiseth the worship, of God, according to the best knowledge which he hath been able to attain unto: and this, I make no doubt, is acceptable in the sight of God, and blessed of Him to work many profitable fruits upon the spirit of His servant. It exalteth the soul into a high and holy frame, and holdeth it therein engaged with all the most sublime thoughts and devout aspirations. It is for the while raised above the world, and above itself; feels its own littleness and dependence; the vanity and transitoriness of all worldly things. The soul, at such seasons, is far more open to receive gracious communications, whether by revelation of the word, or by inspiration of the Spirit, or declaration of the Father's will. And, oh! what a sweet and holy feeling of brotherly love is breathed over the souls which thus unite their prayers in one! How oft when rising from our knees are we disposed to embrace and bless one another! What reverence of God; what sense of His presence; what awe of His majesty! These are by far the most elevated and precious actings of the soul; which never knoweth its true nobility till it is able to ascend to God upon the wings of prayer and praise. Till then it is ignorant of itself; its highest faculties lie rusting in the bud; no enlargement of wisdom nor compass of discourse is half so excellent in itself, or half so profitable to the spirit, as to worship God "in spirit and in truth." And he who is exercised therein, doth acquire such a depth and gravity of feeling upon all subjects, such a divine contentment and resignation under adversities, and patience under afflictions; he becomes meditative of the ways of God, observant of His manifold dealings with his soul; contemplative of His works, full of gentleness and consolation within himself, of rest and refreshment to the wearied souls of others. Oh, what a treasure is a devout spirit! what a help to the highest places in the kingdom of God is devotion! Rich, rich indeed; pure, and most fertile, is the soil which is thus produced, strengthened, and supplied. To be convinced of this, do but reflect how opposite it is to worldliness, by remembering how worldly discourse unfits the soul for its performance; how ill it suits

with gaiety, levity, and laughter, which wholly destroy the faculty of devotion; how a load of cares upon the spirit weighs it down to the earth in the act of praise or prayer: and be assured, therefore, that nothing is so truly the antagonist of, nor so effectual to guard against, the engendering of those thorns, and briers, and thistles, which scourge the soil of a living spirit; nothing so prevalent against the attractions of the world, and the low-thoughted cares of this life, which darken the light of truth, and quench the workings of the Holy Spirit. If I were to pitch upon the human composition which it was most profitable for a spirit to hear, and enter into, and be exercised with, I would say, the public service of the Church of England was that composition: for in following it, you are carried over all possible heights, and into all possible depths; canticles of adoration, acts of confession, humiliation, and self-prostration, declarations of sound belief, large-hearted intercessions of charity, most loyal and dutiful prayers for all ranks of the people, do together combine such an exercise for an immortal spirit as only one thing can surpass. And what is that? The capacity of doing it, the freedom of attempting it, for ourselves. This is more excellent still; and when it is attained in any measure and variety, as I know it may, by the most plain and unlettered man conversant with the Scriptures, and of a devout spirit, then have I nothing to prefer before it. O mothers, what a loss you entail upon your children when you are careless of their devotions! O fathers, what a loss you entail upon your families when you neglect or postpone to any other thing the duties of family worship! O men and brethren, what a wound you inflict upon yourselves when you neglect the ordinances of public worship, or suffer yourselves to engage in them with formality and indifference!

The atmosphere is not more necessary to the vegetation of a plant, than devotion is to the growth of these virtues within the soul, which go to form the soil of "a good and honest heart," whereof we now treat. And very much the same uses which the atmosphere serveth to the growth of plants, doth devotion serve to the growth of all good fruits in the soul. For the plant, by having its roots in the earth, doth, in licking

up the moisture, inhale from the earth a certain substance which it is as necessary for it to cast off, as it is for animals to cast out through the draught the refuse and dregs of what they eat and drink. All life which is supported upon the earth imbibes a vile intermixture of things, which life must separate and discharge out of the system, otherwise it will soon sicken and die. Now, behold you the use of the atmosphere to the plants, which in the season of the night do give out from their leaves that noxious substance which they have separated from the nourishment: and this is the reason why we may not without risk sleep beside plants in the night season. Thus they purge themselves by their commerce with the air of heaven, from that feculency which they draw up from their intercourse with the ground. Even so doth man by devotion cleanse off the impurities which his spirit deriveth from the business and commerce of worldly life: for there is a baseness and a wickedness in all human associations, a mixture, to say the best of it, in all human occupations, which clouds and sickens the spirit of a man, damps all its ardours, extinguishes all its holy aspirations, and in time drowns its spiritual life utterly; unless from time to time we do by confessions, and meditations, and prayers unto God, and acts of lively faith upon the blood of Christ, purge and cleanse our conscience from dead works, to serve the living God. This is true of all works, and of all intercourse which man hath with this lower world. The works of religious societies are full of it; private alms-deeds and charities are also full of it: I feel my own duties as a pastor and minister of the gospel to be full of it: everything wherein a man hath ado with a man is full of it; and a multitude of such engagements is so far from dispensing with the lowly offices of devotion, that they only exact and demand them the more. In proportion as we do "works meet for repentance," have we had to repent of the unworthiness of our works, and to purge our conscience from the vile sediment which they leave upon it, by acts of faith upon the blood of Christ. These utterances of confession, and oblations of penitence, and acts of faith upon the blood of Christ, I call the lowlier offices of devotion, which

do but prepare the way of the soul for the higher offices of adoration of the Divine perfections, contemplation of the Divine works, ascensions into the region of the Divine will, loving affections towards the beauty of the Son, and communion and fellowship with the Holy Spirit and the holy catholic Church. To breathe in this higher region, and to live in it, it is necessary that we be cleansed by the washings and purifications of the former. And observe here also, the exactness of the emblem of the growth of plants, with relation to the growth of the spirit. When the plant hath thus cleansed itself, in the season of the night, from the foul substance which it takes in with its nourishment by its roots, then when the sun ariseth, it is ready for holding a higher and more vital communion with the air of heaven. For now every leaf is diligently occupied inhaling the pure air of life, the oxygen or vital part of the air, by which all healthy and vigorous and joyful life is supported. This is the breathing of the plant; whence it hath the quickening life which enables it to draw nourishment from the moisture of the earth, as well as the power to purge off the unwholesome and deadly matter which it hath gathered from the earth. And such, in the higher region of devotion, is the communion with the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, which we hold in prayer: it is the soul of all life, and the spirit of all action, the substance of all truth, the perception of all sin, the source of all conviction, contrition, and confession: and with this view I have presented it to you as a most extraordinary means, in the hands of God's Spirit, for creating, and refreshing, and increasing, the soil of an honest and a good heart in all His people.

And so much have I to say upon the intellectual and moral influence of the visible Church of Christ, with its book, the living members, its continual ministry of doctrine, and its regular exercises of devotion. It is by far the highest and most important of the subjects which I have handled, and therefore I reserved it for the last.

THE BOOK OF PSALMS.

THE BOOK OF PSALMS.

AS in political affairs the enlightened Scottish patriot and statesman, in order to work upon the people, asked for the songs of a nation, rather than its profound and laborious literature; and, in ecclesiastical affairs, the politic churchmen of Rome apprehended more danger to their craft and mystery from Luther's spiritual songs than from all his writings of controversial and popular theology; so, in spiritual affairs, it is to be believed that no book of the sacred canon seizeth such a hold upon the spiritual man, and engendereth in the Church so much fruitfulness of goodness and truth, of comfort and joy, as doth the Book of Psalms. We say not that the Psalms are so well fitted as the pure light of the Gospel by John, and Paul's Epistles, which are the refraction of that pure light over the fields of human well-being, to break the iron-bone, and bruise the millstone-heart of the natural man; but that they are the kindliest medicine for healing his wounds, and the most proper food for nourishing the new life which comes from the death and destruction of the old. For, as the songs and lyrical poems of a nation, which have survived the changes of time by being enshrined in the hearts of a people, contain the true form and finer essence of its character, and convey the most genial moods of its spirit, whether in seasons of grief or joy, down to the children, and the children's children, perpetuating the strongest vitality of choice spirits, awakened by soul-moving events, and holding, as in a vessel, to the lips of posterity, the collected spirit of venerable antiquity: so the Psalms, which are the songs and odes, and lyrical poems of the people of God, inspired not of wine, or festal mirth, of war,

or love, but spoken of holy men as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, contain the words of God's Spirit taught to the souls of His servants, when they were exercised with the most intense experiences, whether of conviction, penitence, and sorrow, or faith, love, and joy; and are fit not only to express the same most vital moods of every renewed soul, but also powerful to produce those broad awakenings of spirit, to create those overpowering emotions, and propagate that energy of spiritual life in which they had their birth.

Be it observed, moreover, that these songs of Zion express not only the most remarkable passages which have occurred in the spiritual experience of the most gifted saints, but are the record of the most wonderful dispensations of God's providence unto His Church;—containing pathetic dirges sung over her deepest calamities, jubilees over her mighty deliverances, songs of sadness for her captivity, and songs of mirth for her prosperity, prophetic announcement of her increase to the end of time, and splendid anticipations of her ultimate glory. Not, indeed, the exact narrative of the events as they happened, or are to happen, nor the prosaic improvement of the same to the minds of men; but the poetical form and monument of the event, where it is laid up and embalmed in honourable-wise, after it hath been incensed and perfumed with the spiritual odours of the souls of inspired men. And if they contain not the code of the Divine law, as it is written in the Books of Moses, and more briefly, yet better written, in our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, they celebrate the excellency and glory of the law, its light, life, wisdom, contentment, and blessedness, with the joys of the soul which keepeth it, and the miseries of the soul which keepeth it not. And if they contain not the argument of the simple doctrines, and the detail of the issues of the gospel, to reveal which the Word of God became flesh, and dwelt among us; yet now that the key is given, and the door of spiritual life is opened, where do we find such spiritual treasures as in the Book of Psalms, wherein are revealed the depth of the soul's sinfulness, the stoutness of her rebellion against God, the horrors of spiritual desertion, the agonies of contrition, the blessedness of pardon, the joys of restoration, the constancy of faith, and every other

variety of Christian experience? And if they contain not the narrative of Messiah's birth, and life, and death; or the labours of His apostolic servants, and the strugglings of His infant Church, as these are written in the books of the New Testament;—where, in the whole Scriptures, can we find such declarations of the work of Christ, in its humiliation and its glory, the spiritual agonies of His death, and glorious issues of His resurrection, the wrestling of His kingdom with the powers of darkness, its triumph over the heathen, and the overthrow of all its enemies, until the heads of many lands shall have been wounded, and the people made willing in the day of His power? And where are there such outbursting representations of all the attributes of Jehovah, before whom, when He rideth through the heavens, the very heavens seem to rend in twain, to give the vision of His going forth, and we seem to see the haste of the universe to do her homage, and to hear the quaking of nature's pillars, the shaking of her foundations, and the horrible outcry of her terror? And oh! it is sweet in the midst of these soarings into the third heavens of vision, to feel that you are borne upon the words of a man, not upon the wings of an archangel; to hear ever and anon the frail but faithful voice of humanity, making her trust under the shadow of His wings, and her hiding-place in the secret of His tent; and singing to Him in faithful strains, "For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." So that, as well by reason of the matter which it contains, as of the form in which it is expressed, the Book of Psalms, take it all in all, may be safely pronounced one of the divinest books in all the Scriptures; which hath exercised the hearts and lips of all saints, and become dear in the sight of the Church; which is replenished with the types of all possible spiritual feelings, and suggests the forms of all God-ward emotions, and furnishing the choice expressions of all true worship, the utterances of all divine praise, the confession of all spiritual humility, with the raptures of all spiritual joy.

If now we turn ourselves to consider the manner or style of

the Book, and to draw it into comparison with the lyrical productions of cultivated and classical nations, it may well be said, that as the heavens are high above the earth, so are the songs of Zion high above the noblest strains which have been sung in any land. For, take out of the lyrical poetry of Greece and Rome the praises of women and of wine, the flatteries of men, and idle invocations of the muse and lyre, and what have we left? What dedication of song and music is there to the noble and exalted powers of the human spirit—what to the chaste and honourable relations of human society—what to the excitement of tender emotions towards the widow and the fatherless, the stranger and the oppressed—what to the awful sanctity of law and government, and the practical forms of justice and equity! We know, that in the more ancient time, when men dwelt nearer to God, the lyre of Orpheus was employed to exalt and pacify the soul; that the Pythagorean verses contain the intimations of a deep theology, a divine philosophy, and a virtuous life; that the lyre of Tyrtæus was used by the wisdom of Lycurgus for accomplishing his great work of forming a peculiar people, a nation of brave and virtuous men: but in the times which we call classical, and with the compositions of which we imbue our youth, we find little purity of sentiment, little elevation of soul, no spiritual representations of God, nothing pertaining to heavenly knowledge or holy feeling: but, on the other hand, impurity of life, low, sensual ideas of God, and the pollution of religion, so often as they touch it. But the songs of Zion are comprehensive as the human soul, and varied as human life; where no possible state of natural feeling shall not find itself tenderly expressed, and divinely treated with appropriate remedies; where no condition of human life shall not find its rebuke or consolation: because they treat not life after the fashion of an age or people, but life in its rudiments, the life of the soul, with the joys and sorrows to which it is amenable, from concourse with the outward necessity of the fallen world. Which breadth of application they compass not by the sacrifice of lyrical propriety, or poetical method: for if there be poems strictly lyrical, that is, whose spirit and sentiment move congenial with the movements of music, and which, by their very nature, call

for the accompaniment of music, these Odes of a people despised as illiterate, are such. For pure pathos and tenderness of heart, for sublime imaginations, for touching pictures of natural scenery, and genial sympathy with nature's various moods; for patriotism, whether in national weal or national woe, for beautiful imagery, whether derived from the relationship of human life, or the forms of the created universe, and for the illustration, by their help, of spiritual conditions: moreover, for those rapid transitions in which the lyrical muse delighteth, her lightsome graces at one time, her deep and full inspiration at another, her exuberance of joy and her lowest falls of grief, and for every other form of the natural soul, which is wont to be shadowed forth by this kind of composition, we challenge anything to be produced from the literature of all ages and countries, worthy to be compared with what we find even in the English version of the Book of Psalms. Were the distinction of spiritual from natural life, the dream of mystical enthusiasts, and the theology of the Jews, a cunningly devised fable, like the mythologies of Greece and Rome, these few Odes should be dearer to the man of true feeling and natural taste, than all which have been derived to us from classical times, though they could be sifted of their abominations, and cleansed from the incrustation of impurity which defiles their most exquisite parts. But into these questions of style we enter no further, our present aim being higher. *Paulo majora canamus.* Let us employ the few pages which we have devoted to this Essay, on something more noble than questions of taste, and more enduring than the gratifications of the natural man.

These songs of Zion have always been very dear unto Zion's children; and the various Churches of the Christian faith, as by one harmonious and universal consent, have adopted the Psalms as the outward form by which they shall express the inward feelings of the Christian life. However much the infinitely-varying expositors of Christian doctrine may differ in the opinions and views which they deduce from the Scripture at large; in this they are agreed, that the effusions of the inspired psalmist must always be the true and expressive language of the believing soul. An organ of utterance well and

rightly attuned to every aspiration, and to every emotion of that soul which hath been quickened from spiritual death, and made alive in Christ Jesus the Lord. The pious Arminian, who resteth content with the infant state of Christ, and seeth no more in the rich treasures of God's word than a free gift to all men, shrinking back with a feeling of dismay from such parts of the sacred volume as favour a system of doctrine suited to the manly state of Christian life, can yet trust himself without dismay or doubt to give back, from his inmost spirit, the sentiments and thoughts which he finds embodied in the Book of Psalms, veiled with no obscurity of speech, and perplexed with no form of controversy. He delighteth to read that "the Lord is loving unto every one, and that his tender mercy governs all his works." His spirit hath its liberty amidst those unlimited declarations of the Divine beneficence, sung by Zion's king, when he calleth upon all nature's children to take part with him in his song of praise, and in his liberality includeth the lower creatures, and the very forms of inanimate nature; gathering the voice of all the earth into one, and joining it in symphony with the hosannahs of the unfallen and redeemed spirits which are around the throne of God. And the more enlightened and not less pious Calvinist, who is not content evermore to dwell in the outer court of the holy temple, but resolveth, for his soul's better peace and higher joy, to enter into the holy and most holy place, which is no longer veiled and forbidden, finds in this Book of Psalms a full declaration of the deepest secrets of his faith, expression for his inmost knowledge of the truth, and forms for his most profound feelings upon the peculiar and appropriate and never-failing love of a covenant God towards His own peculiar people; and in concert with David, the father of a spiritual seed, he doth celebrate the praises of that God who freely and for His own sake hath loved His people with an everlasting love; "visiting their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquities with stripes, but not suffering his loving-kindness to fail, or his goodness to depart for evermore." And from whatever point between these two extremes of spiritual life (the former the infancy, the latter the mature and perfect manhood) any Church hath contemplated the scheme of its doctrine—

by whatever name they have thought good to designate themselves, and however bitterly opposed to one another in church government, observance of rites, or administration of sacraments, you still find them with one voice consenting to employ those inspired songs, as well fitted to express the emotions of their spirits, when stirred up to devout and holy aspirations of prayer and praise.

The reason why the Psalms have found such constant favour in the sight of the Christian Church, and come to constitute a chief portion of every missal and liturgy, and form of worship, public or private, while forms of doctrine and discourse have undergone such manifold changes, in order to represent the changing spirit of the age, and the diverse conditions of the human mind, is to be found in this—that they address themselves to the simple instinctive feelings of the renewed soul, which are its most constant and permanent part, whereas, the forms of doctrine and discourse address themselves to the spiritual understanding, which differs in ages and countries according to the degree of spiritual illumination, and the energy of spiritual life. For, as those instincts of our nature, which put themselves forth in infancy and early life, towards our parents, and our kindred, and our friends, and derive thence the nourishment upon which they live, are far more constant, than those opinions which we afterwards form concerning society, civil polity, and the world in general; and, as those impressions of place, and scene, and incident, which come in upon us in our early years, are not only more constant in their endurance, but more uniform in their effect upon the various minds which are submitted to them, than any which are afterwards made by objects better fitted to affect us both permanently and powerfully—so we reckon that there is an infancy of the spiritual man, which, with all its instincts, wanders abroad over the word of God, to receive the impressions thereof, and grow upon their wholesome variety into a maturity of spiritual reason, when it becomes desirous to combine and arrange into conceptions, and systems of conceptions, the manifoldness and variety of those simple impressions which it hath obtained. During those days of its spiritual infancy, the soul rejoiceth as a little child at the breast of its mother; feeds

upon the word of God with a constant relish; delights in the views and prospects which open upon every side, and glories in its heavenly birthright and royal kindred; and considereth with wonder the kingdom of which it is become a denizen, its origin, its miraculous progress, and everlasting glory: and as the infant life opens itself to the Sun of Righteousness, it delights in its activity, and exhales on all around the odour of its breathing joy. To this season of the spiritual mind, the Psalms come most opportunely as its natural food. We say not that they quicken the life, to which nothing is so appropriate as the words of our Lord recorded in the Gospels, but being quickened, they nourish up the life to manhood; and when its manly age is come, prepare it for the strong meat which is to be found in the writings of the prophets and the apostles. But ever afterwards the souls of believers recur to these Psalms as the home of their childhood, where they came to know the loving-kindness of their heavenly Father, the fatness of His house, and the full river of His goodness, His pastoral carefulness, His sure defence, and His eye that slumbereth not, nor sleepeth, with every other simple representation of divine things, to the simple affections of the renewed soul. Therefore are these Psalms to the Christian what the love of parents and the sweet affections of home and the clinging memory of infant scenes, and the generous love of country, are to men of every rank and order, and employment; of every kindred, and tongue, and nation.

This principle which binds these Psalms with cords of love to the renewed soul, and the right use and application of them to the bringing up of spiritual children, will be more clearly manifested, if, from the varieties of Christian experience, we select those great leading features, which are common to all, and show how fitly they are expressed in the Book of Psalms, —with how much beauty and tenderness of feeling, with how much richness of allusion to the ancient history of the Church, and with whatever other accompaniments which can make them sweet to the present perusal of the soul, easy and delightful to it in its recollective and reflective mood.

Without dispute or controversy upon minor points of dif-

ference, the Church of the first-born whose names are written in heaven, meet upon the common ground of a fallen nature. Once they had supposed themselves upright before God, strong in natural integrity, possessing an undoubted claim to the final approbation of a righteous judge. But it was in the days of their ignorance that they thus conceived of their own worth; and now that the rays of divine light and truth have penetrated the darkness in which their souls were shrouded, they see an end of that perfection which was heretofore their boast. The breadth of the divine commandment is revealed to them, and being sorely pressed with an even present sense of their defilement, they afflict their souls together, falling prostrate before the thrice Holy Majesty, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity; and confess with the royal penitent, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." Whatever point of faith or doctrine any one of Zion's children may seem to be deficient in, if he be but a babe of Christ, able to feed only upon the nourishment of babes, and rejecting the food of riper years, yet shall he have come to the knowledge of the plagues of his own heart, and be moved to spread forth his hands in supplication towards the temple of the Lord, and to say, "I acknowledge my transgression, and my sin is ever before me." The universal Church afflicteth her soul under the abiding sense of the loss of her original beauty; and under a deep feeling of her present misery, she deploreth her bondage to the powers of darkness and the God of this world; and her children mingle their tears together by the waters of their captivity, and wail because of the oppression of their mother, and they cry out of the depths of their desolation, "Let the sighing of the prisoners come before thee, and according to the greatness of thy power preserve those that are appointed unto death." "Save us, O Lord, by thy name, judge us by thy strength, for strangers are risen up against us, and oppressors seek after our souls." Oh, how do the true mourners with one accord come unto the Lord weeping and with supplication, "that their captivity may be turned, and salvation brought them out of Zion!" How do they beseech the Lord, "giving him no rest till he make Jacob to rejoice, and Israel to be glad; till

he do good in his good pleasure unto Zion, and build up again the walls of Jerusalem!" and when the Lord hath harkened unto the voice of the cry of His people, and turned their captivity, delivering them from the strong enemy that held them, bringing them forth also into a large place, and subduing under them the foes that were too mighty for them; how do they with one accord magnify the Lord, and extol His name together, and with one harmonious voice celebrate the praise of Him who, strong to save them, hath trodden upon the lion and the adder, the young lion and the dragon hath trampled under foot. "O Lord of Hosts, who is a strong God like unto thee? thou hast a mighty arm; strong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand. Thou hast broken Rahab in pieces, as one that was slain. Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne, mercy and truth shall go before thy face."

The true Israel of God, the spiritual worshippers under the gospel dispensation, being rescued from this worse than Egyptian bondage, by the strong hand and outstretched arm of the God of their salvation, commemorate in many a song sung in Zion of old, the interposition of Divine love and grace, and oft looking back upon the raging sea, which was fain to yield them a safe passage; they proceed onward in their course through the weary wilderness, to the abode of their rest, and the promised city of their habitation; and they had hoped they were safe from the power of their cruel adversary, and that their foot was safely planted upon their own land. But now they find, to the travail of their souls, that though they be no longer the willing slaves of Satan, but partakers of the glorious liberty wherewith Christ hath set His people free, they must use the arms of freemen to retain their newly acquired liberty, march militant, and build the wall of their city in troublous times, and abide unto the death the faithful soldiers of the Captain of their salvation. "Each one had said in his prosperity, I shall never be moved; thou, Lord, of thy favour hadst made my mountain to stand strong." But ere long, each one for himself exclaims, "O God, the heathen are come into thine inheritance, thy holy temple have they defiled, and made Jerusalem a heap of stones."—"Send thine

hand from above, rid me and deliver me from the hand of strange children, whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood." And oh, how do Zion's children cry out ever and anon together, in pain to be delivered from the remaining and continually reviving power of that sin which cleaveth to them with all the force of nature, and is only kept in check and brought under subjection, by the more powerful operation of the Spirit of grace which dwelleth in them! And they continually cry out with the king of Israel, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me: purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than the snow." The experience of the Lord's saints is ever one. As face answereth to face in a glass, so the heart of man to man, whether it be the heart in its unrenewed or renewed state, its workings will not be found diverse, but the same,—moods of the mind common to every child of the second as of the first Adam. Whatever is written in Moses, and the Prophets, and the Psalms, concerning the former Church, must be fulfilled in the experience of every saint of the present Church; and there is no spiritual song, which they do not appropriate and make their own. In them it is fulfilled. For, it is but the Spirit of Christ speaking at various times; of whom no word is mortal, but every word immortal. And it is their constant work to search out the personal application of the Spirit, and appropriate it to themselves: and through every trial and stage of their spiritual life, they say, with the psalmist, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path; open thou mine eyes that I may discern wondrous things out of thy law." Ah, how they meditate thereon day and night! and truly can every child of David's kingdom say, "Lord, how I love thy law; it is my meditation all the day; mine eyes prevent the night watches, that I might meditate on thy word." And the anxious and diligent travail of Zion's children in the study of their Master's word, is repaid by the sweet and pleasant contemplations which they are continually deriving thence, for the refreshment and consolation of their spirit. And the language of their soul is ever, "How sweet are thy words to my taste, yea sweeter than honey to my

mouth! the law of thy mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver."

But the saints of God mourn not for themselves alone, nor do they rejoice only for themselves. Nor is it for their own solitary rescue from the jaws of the devouring lion, that they offer up strong cries unto the Lord; nor for their single salvation, that they sing the praises of redeeming love. They are not altogether absorbed with the variety of their own spiritual conflicts, or swallowed up in the sense of their own manifold trials and temptations; nor for themselves alone do they study the precious word of God, or dig for its hid treasure with the avarice of the man who knoweth not the riches of communicated wealth. The utterances of individual feeling, of whatever kind, form but a part, perhaps the lesser part, of the spiritual exercises of the man of God. If he fears with a salutary fear, lest it be said of him at any time, "The vineyard of others hath he kept, but his own vineyard hath he not kept:" he hath yet a heart to mourn with those that mourn, and to rejoice with those that rejoice. He is a member of the mystical body of his Lord, whereof when any member suffers, all the members suffer with it; when any member is honoured, all the members rejoice. Therefore it is a first instinct of the spiritual man, to have a deep and abiding sympathy with every brother of human kind, upon whose renewed spirit he discovers the impress of his Master's image: and he says, "All my delight is in the saints that are upon the earth, and upon such as excel in virtue." Unlike the natural man, who at his best estate is built up in selfish feeling or unholy emulation, the man of God looks not only at his own things, but at the things of others. With the love that is peculiar to the true saint, he desires the well-being of his brother, and rejoiceth over it even as if it were his own. How doth he continually make supplication for all saints, that their faith and love may abound unto the glory of God: how earnestly doth he desire their increase of grace, and that they may be filled with all the knowledge of God! and he ever prays for the peace of Jerusalem, saying evermore, "Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will

now say, Peace be with thee. Because of the house of our God, I will seek thy good. Do good, O Lord, unto those that be good; and strengthen the upright in heart." In Zion's troubles his spirit is troubled, and he hangeth his harp upon the willows, refusing the song of mirth, and preferring the cause of captive Zion, before his own chief joy. And he prayeth on her behalf continually, "The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble, the name of the God of Jacob defend thee." Send thou help from the sanctuary, and strengthen thee out of Zion. Remember all thy offerings, and accept all thy burnt sacrifices. Grant thee according to thy heart, and fulfil all thy counsel.

Now there hath grown up in these lean years a miserable notion, that the Psalms are not so appropriate for expressing the communion of the Christian Church, for the reason that they contain allusions to places and events which are of Jewish, and not of Christian association. And some have gone so far as to weed out all those venerable associations, by introducing modern names of places in their stead. Why do they not upon the same principle weed out the Jewish allusions of the four Gospels, and the Epistles? But it is as poor in taste and wrong in feeling, as it is daring in the thought, and bold in the execution. In doing so, they consult for the *homely* feeling of the *natural*, not of the *spiritual* man, because the *home* of the spiritual was in Jerusalem, and Mount Zion and the temple of God, with which the soul connects her anticipations, no less than her recollections, being taught that the new Jerusalem is to come down from heaven like a bride, decked for her bridegroom, and that those who are sealed are to stand upon Mount Zion with the Lamb of God. Every name in the Psalms, whether of person or of place, hath a mystical meaning given to it in the Christian Scriptures. Jerusalem is not the Jerusalem that was, nor is Babylon the Babylon that was, and even David hath lost his personality in the everlasting David. Judah and Israel mean not now the cast-away root, but the branch that hath been grafted in. Besides, we hold at present only one cycle of the revolution of God's purpose; the Jews shall yet be brought in, and Jerusalem become glorious, and the dwelling of God be again with men. Why, then,

should any part of everlasting Scripture be made the property of an age or place, which suppose every Christian nation to do, and where were the community of the Christian Church? It is heady innovation, and leanness of spirit which hath brought this to pass, for no end that we can see, save to gratify national vanity, and connect religion in a strange league with patriotism; thereby breaking the continuity of God's dispensation; and destroying all lyrical propriety. As if you would render the odes of Horace into English, with English names of men and places, in order to make them more edifying to the English reader. But more need not be said upon this blunder in piety, which will disappear when the lean years are over and gone. If we take not our forms for expressing spiritual patriotism, from those inspired songs through which, in the old time, the Church breathed the spirit of her high privilege, and separate community, where shall we obtain them of like unction and equal authority, in the experience of times during which no prophet hath arisen in the holy city? For though the Church hath been as sorely tried under the Gentile, as under the Jewish dispensation, it hath not pleased the Lord to bestow upon any of her priests or people, the garment of inspiration, with which to clothe in spiritual songs the depths of her sorrow, or the exultation of her joy. And we are shut up to the necessity, either of responding to the voice of the Spirit in the ancient psalmist, or to re-echo the poetical effusions of uninspired men,—either to address the living God in the language of His own word, or in the language of some vernacular poet, whose taste and forms of thinking, whose forms of feeling, yea, and forms of opinion, we must make mediators between our soul and the ear of God,—which is a great evil to be avoided, whenever it can be avoided. For Christians must be forms of the everlasting and common Spirit; not mannerists of mortal and individual men.

But to return. Not only do the personal instincts, and the social instincts of the child of God, find in these Psalms the milk and honey of their existence, a cradle and a home where to wax and grow; and a multifarious world of imagery to awaken and entertain its various senses; but also those instincts of pity, and compassion, and longing charity, which it

hath towards the enemies of Christ, not indeed as His enemies, but as the hopeful prodigals of the human family, which He loveth in common with the rest, and would, in like manner, save. The true disciples of the compassionate and tender-hearted Friend of sinners, adopt the language of Israel's king, when he pours out his soul in anxious longings for the salvation of the wicked, deprecating their stout-hearted rebellion against the King of kings, and exhorting to be timely wise, lest they fail of their final and everlasting rest. The new man in Christ Jesus, the regenerate, adopted child of the second Adam, who, under the sweet and enlightening influence of many newly-awakened feelings, perceives himself to be linked in new and constraining bonds of sympathy with every kindred soul in Christ, is, nevertheless, not so absorbed in the joyful consciousness of those newly-formed relations into which he hath been introduced by grace, as to forget that he is still united by many dear and tender ties to his brethren in the flesh. His original descent from the first Adam, he does not cease to recollect; and the conviction that, in virtue of this descent, he was by nature a child of wrath even as others, stimulates his zeal in behalf of those who appear to be less highly favoured than himself, and will not suffer his love towards them to fail. If, to the inexpressible peace and consolation of his soul, he finds himself to be now under the royal law of liberty, he grieveth to behold his kindred, his friends, his neighbours, the world at large, still oppressed with the yoke of bondage, heedless of their degradation, and careless to take up their purchased redemption. If the law of God be precious to him, and he discover in it a beauty, and excellence, and a goodness ever commending it to the love and admiration of his enlightened spirit, how doth he weep and mourn on account of those by whom it is ignorantly set at nought and utterly despised! He adopteth the language of Israel's king, "Horror hath taken hold upon me, because of the wicked that forsake thy law. Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron: thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Beware now, therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye

perish from the right way, when his wrath is kindled but a little."

There are many passages in the Psalms which seem to breathe an opposite spirit of hostility and revenge upon the personal enemies of the psalmist, and to heap upon their heads all the curses which are written in the book of the law of God. Concerning this, and many other points, it is well stated, that though the gospel law be "charity out of a pure heart," this charity doth manifest itself under various forms, some pleasant, but most of them painful to the natural man. Rebuke is a form of charity; and censure, and excommunication, yea, and total abandonment for a while. Truth is always a form of charity; or, to speak more properly, truth is the soul of which charity is but the beautiful, graceful, and lovely member. Charity, therefore, is not to be known by soft words, and fair speeches, and gentle actions, which are oftener the form of policy and courtesy; but must be sought in the principle of the heart, out of which all our words, speeches, and actions come forth. It is love to God producing love to all His family, by which we are moved; then is it charity, be its form commendation or blame, mildness or zeal, the soft and gentle moods of mercy, or the stern inflictions of justice, or the hasty strokes of hot and fiery indignation: and wisdom must determine the form which is proper to the occasion. Is not God a God of love? and how diversified are the moods of His providence even to His own beloved children? Christ brought mercy to the earth, and in the gospel builded for her an ark, in which she might swim over the deluge of cruelty which covereth the earth. Yet how terrible is that gospel in its revelation to the wicked, how unsparing of the world, how cruel to the flesh, how contemptuous of good-natured formality, how awfully vindictive against hypocrisy; taking every one of its children, and swearing him upon the altar to be an enemy, till death, against the world, the devil, and the flesh! Against the various forms, then, of the devil, the world, and the flesh, we are sworn; and, in order to their destruction, must make war with the two-edged sword which proceedeth out of the mouth of the Word of God. Of these

strong actings of the soul against the wickedness of the wicked, the psalmist's language of cursing is but the breath. The world is the heathen whom he prays God to break in pieces. And for ever let the Christian exercise himself with that warfare, else he shall never know the fellowship of the Redeemer's sufferings. It is the capital principle of all sound doctrine, That the world is to be destroyed. It is the deep-rooted source of all heretical doctrine, That the world is to be mended. And to keep the one in mind, the other out of mind, it is most necessary that no mean portion of the devotion of a Christian Church should be to express the desires of their soul on this behalf. Charity being unviolated; yea, charity being edified; for, until the sceptre of the world is broken in pieces, charity can find no room, but is fain to flee into the wilderness. Out of the same charity, therefore, ought the Christian to adopt these expressions of his hatred to the form and fruits of wickedness, that he expresseth his longing desire that the souls of the wicked should be set free and saved.

Such is the food, exercise, and entertainment which the child of God receives in this precious portion of His word, to all those instincts of the renewed spirit which regard self-preservation, the communion of saints, and the salvation of the world. But beyond these objects which dwell upon the earth, he is carried upward to hold communion with the God and Father of his spirit, from whom he hath obtained the new birth, and by whom this new principle is kept alive in its uncongenial habitation. Many are the conflicts of Zion's children in their way to the heavenly city, and great the travail of their souls, under the variety and might of which they need appropriate encouragement from Him who is greater than all their enemies, and in whom is their trust. Their own individual salvation, their own peculiar trials, their own besetting enemies, Zion's well-being, and the share of all her sorrows till her warfare is ended; the world's salvation, in which they must travail till the number of the elect is accomplished, and, as priests unto God, offer up continual supplication: how shall they prosper in such an arduous work, without constant communion and fellowship with the Father, and with His Son

Jesus Christ? For which communion with the Godhead these divine songs of Israel furnish the most sublime, the most pathetic, and the most varied forms. Here the perfections of Jehovah are revealed to all His saints, whether in His strength, as the God of Hosts; or in His righteousness, as before whom the heavens are not clean; or in His intelligence, as the pure light, in whom is no darkness at all; or in His all-pervading presence, in the highest heavens, and the deepest hell, and the uttermost parts of the earth, and the dwelling-place of darkness; or as the Father of all life, and the Creator of all wealth, and the liberal Provider for the wants of everything that liveth, as the Glory of the hosts above, and the Terror of the hosts beneath; the Eternal, Unchangeable, without variableness or the shadow of turning; who of old laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of His hands; which, when they wax old, He shall fold up as a vesture, and cover them with a new garment of creation, while He remaineth the same, and His years have no end. O my soul! that thou couldst tell how thou hast been enlarged into the liberty of divine thought, and borne upon the wings of contemplation beyond the bounds of time and space, wrapt into the mysteries of the divine life, and with a strong heart and serene countenance brought back to fight and finish thy warfare, till thy change come, by the glorious representations of Jehovah and His acts, contained in the Book of Psalms, which truly are the fiery chariot, the vehicle sent from God to carry the saints into the third heavens, that they may breathe an imperial air, and return lightened of their troubles, and quickened in their spirit, to finish the heavy work which God hath given them to do.

Of this, indeed, no one will doubt, be he spiritual or carnal, that these Psalms contain such representations of the great and mighty God, as mind of man never conceived, or pen of man indited; but more marvellous is it still to find in these Psalms, which looked afar off at the day of Christ, all the perfections and peculiar attributes of Messiah, which form to His redeemed people the endless theme of praise, issuing from the heart, and returning into the heart again, like the waters which the firmament draweth from the earth, and droppeth

again upon the earth in dews and refreshing showers. These are set forth in a way most noble, most true, and most full of feeling. In such a wonderful way is the man Christ Jesus represented in these Psalms, uttering His soul unto His Father, unto His people, unto His persecutors, or unto His own bosom, that the children are able to take part in them, and find to their inexpressible joy that He is one with them in mind, in heart, in deed, and in very word. And now, let us take free scope to set forth this, the most soul-quieting, and soul-delighting virtue of these Songs of Zion: that they contain the symphonies of Messiah and His children, of Immanuel and His people.

But first, like the bride who loveth to look upon the face of the bridegroom, and to hear of all his excellence, that she may with the more gladness give herself into his bosom, and rejoice in his embrace; the Church doth well love and much delight to hear it said of Him by Jehovah, "I will declare the decree, Thou art mine only Son; this day have I begotten thee;" "Thou wast set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was;" "From everlasting to everlasting thou art God, the same who did appoint the foundation of the earth, establish the clouds above, and strengthen the fountains of the deep; of old thou hast laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands." And how her glory rejoiceth to hear, that for the love of her that He might wash her in His blood, and present her without spot or wrinkle in the presence of His Father, He became a partaker of flesh and blood, and was found in fashion as a man, yea, took upon Him the form of a servant; that by toil, and servitude, and suffering, and death, He might purchase her love. Making request unto His Father, thus—"Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: mine ears hast thou bored. Lo, I come to do thy will, O God!" Remembering how He fulfilled all righteousness for her sake, and redeemed her from the curse, by becoming a curse for her, she thus sings her unbounded love, "And he bowed the heavens and came down; darkness was under his feet. He made darkness his secret place, his pavilion round about him was dark waters and thick clouds of the skies. He took

me, he drew me out of many waters. He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them which hated me." And looking on Him whom she caused to be pierced, whose beauty was wasted by death, and the joy of His soul drunk up by the fierce arrows of His Father, she mourns and weeps, and her eyes distil with tears, at the thought of those stripes by which she was healed; and by the deepest of all sympathies, the sufferings of Messiah became the sufferings of the Church, and she crieth out, with her suffering Lord, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me! O my God, I cry in the day time, but thou hearest me not, and in the night season, and am not silent! I am poured out like water, all my bones are out of joint. My strength is dried up like a potsherd, my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; thou hast brought me to the dust of death."

But the symphonies which the Church singeth with Christ out of this book are not all a fellowship of suffering. For, not only by the shedding of His blood did Messiah make propitiation for her sins, and destroy her writing of condemnation, and put a new song in her mouth—"Who is he that condemneth," but also for her hath He purchased the raiment of an everlasting righteousness, and the beauties of holiness, and the spirit of a perfect obedience, which, by precious justifying faith, she claimeth as her own, and over which she singeth other symphonies of gladness: "I have kept the ways of the Lord, and have not wickedly departed from my God. For all his judgments were before me, and I did not put away his statutes from me. I was upright before him, and I kept myself from mine iniquity. Therefore hath the Lord recompensed me according to my righteous dealing, according to the cleanness of my hands in his eyesight." And in the greatness of her loyal love, how many a song singeth the daughter of Zion, touching the things that belong unto the King, when her tongue is as the pen of a ready writer: "Thou art fairer than the children of men; grace is poured upon thy lips, therefore God hath blessed thee for ever. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, who redeemeth thy life from destruction, and crowneth thee with loving-kindness, and tender mercies." And with what a brave pulse of glory

doth her heart exult towards the accomplishment of Messiah's kingdom, and the fulness of His power; when all lands shall call upon His name, and all nations shall bow before Him, and there shall be given to Him of Sheba's gold, and His name shall endure for ever, and last like the sun, and men shall be blessed in Him, and all nations shall call Him blessed! Then His people sing in high symphony with their triumphant King and all-conquering Lord, in whom each one feeleth himself to be a conqueror and a king, seated on His throne, and sharing in His royal sovereignty, "Thou hast made me the head of the heathen; a people whom I have not known shall serve me; as soon as they hear of me they shall obey me. The strangers shall submit themselves unto me."

For what are the conquests of David, or the greater conquests of David's everlasting Son, over the kingdoms of the earth, but a shadow of that inward conquest which Christ worketh over his enemies within our soul, which is more valuable than the earth, and to conquer which is a higher achievement than to subdue the kingdoms of the earth! The history of the Church is such a shadow of soul-history, as creation is of the omnipotent Spirit which made it. The soul is a thing for the Son of God to conquer, the world is for Cæsar, or the son of Philip. The soul, the boundless world of the soul to recover; to reconcile its warring powers, to breathe the life of God over its chaotic wastes—this is a work whereof all outward works are only fit to be the emblems; a work, in the execution of which every spiritual man feels the going forth of his Saviour conquering and to conquer. And he hath every outward action of holy writ realised inwardly—every groan of the conquered, every struggle of the conqueror, His toil, His sweat, His wounds, His death, His resurrection, His second going forth in the plenitude of the Spirit, His unconquered resolution, His long-abiding labour, the turning of the tide of battle, His sword upon the neck of His enemies, the shout of victory, the treading of the nations in the wine-press of His fury, His shivering them with His iron sceptre like a potsherd, His driving them with death, and the grave, and him that had the power of death, into the bottomless pit. His reign of peace, its joy, full contentment, and perfect assur-

ance, what are they all, but letters, words, and similitudes, whereby the believer may better understand, and better express the spiritual work which is going on with his own soul, by the casting down of imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ? If a company of musical and melodious souls feel in unison with the sounds which flow from chords touched by the hands of a master musician, and a company of rich and poetical souls feel in harmony, while the drama of a master poet is rehearsed with true action in their ears, shall not the souls of spiritual men be in harmony, while perusing the outward action, whereof they are the subject? Be in harmony! ay, in truest harmony. For they are the end of it all, the meaning of it all. In them it hath its reality, and till realised in them, it is an incomprehensible world to words and images, a hieroglyphic with no interpretation; a musical instrument, with no hand cunning enough to bring out its infinite streams of liquid music. Therefore, by no mystery but reality, though it be *deep* spiritual reality, deeper far than nature's penetration, they sing, "He hath ascended up on high, leading captivity captive, and receiving gifts for us, even for the rebellious, that the Lord our God may dwell among us. Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in. Who is the King of glory? The Lord, strong and mighty, the Lord, mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates, even lift up ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory." And in spirit they see the heavens to have opened their glorious gates, and behold the desire of their soul seated at the right hand of God, and they hear the welcome of Jehovah to the Son of man, "Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool, and thy people willing in the day of thy power, when the rod of thy strength shall be sent out of Zion."

But the sympathy of the Church with her glorified Head endeth not with His exaltation to the right hand of the Highest; but from the new office to which she heareth Him

appointed—"Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek," she doth derive an assurance, a blessed confidence, that He standeth ever on high, to revive the drooping faith of His people. He is passed within the veil, to offer the blood of His own sacrifice, and intercede for the sins of His people, whose hope is passed in along with Him, and anchored within the veil. And when their souls languish even to the gates of death, and the adversary presseth sore upon them, that they might fall, and for a moment darkness covereth their soul, and they say, Will the Lord cast off for ever, and will He be favourable no more? Is His mercy clean gone for ever? doth His promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he in anger shut up His tender mercies? Straightway, they remember their infirmity, and call to mind the years of the right hand of the Most High; and are assured that Messiah ever liveth to make intercession for them, and that if any man sin, he has an advocate with the Most High, even Christ Jesus, the righteous. They remember the man of sorrows who was acquainted with grief, and can be touched with the feeling of their infirmities, having been in all points tempted like as they are, yet without sin. And taking heart, they exclaim, "The Lord is the strength of my life. Of whom shall I be afraid? Though a host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear. Though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident, the Lord is my rock and my fortress, my strength in whom I will trust, my buckler, the horn also of my salvation, and my high tower." And thus the children of God are exercised between the troubles of life, and the consolations of faith, between a body of sin and death, and a life which is born of God, and hidden with Christ in God. The principalities and powers of darkness would fain overwhelm the light and life of their soul, but they know that the powers of the flesh cannot oppress the powers of the Spirit. They see the body of Christ, which was rescued by the power of the Spirit from the jaws of the grave, standing in the presence of God on high. And they are assured thereby that the holy seed, born within them of the same Spirit, will, in like manner, quicken their mortal flesh, and at length re-demand and

rescue from the grave the body, that it may live and reign with Christ for evermore.

At length cometh the end of all trial and experiences, for which there is an abundant preparation made in this store-house of spiritual feeling. Messiah's spiritual seed, the heirs of many exceeding great and precious promises, who know that to them an abundant entrance shall be ministered into the everlasting kingdom of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, anticipate with hope and joy, not with fear and dismay, the time when their earthly house of this tabernacle being dissolved, they shall enter into the building of God, the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Many a dark and gloomy valley have they passed through, since the time at which they turned all their faces Zionward, and became pilgrims in the strait and narrow way which leadeth unto life. The last sad and dismal vale through which they have to pass, before their earthly pilgrimage be accomplished, is the valley of the shadow of death, which so many appalling shapes and forms of terror hover around. The deep shades of an eternal night seem evermore to rest upon it. Dark and portentous clouds hang round about it, and shut it in, impervious to mortal sight. Nature looks upon the gloom, and attempts in vain to discover the limits of the inhospitable region. Knowledge is baffled, and discovery is set at nought. Visions of terror trouble the eye which comes near it. Unearthly sounds of horror strike upon his ear who approacheth it. New and mysterious emotions seize upon the appalled spirit, which feels no capacity of dying, nor symptoms of death, while the tabernacle is all crumbling into dust, and she shrinks back aghast, and asks herself how she is to fare alone, with no one to cheer or accompany her. And though nature would fain nerve herself to it, she feels how utterly weak she is, how profitless strength, wealth, knowledge, friendship, and what else she boasted in. "My heart is sore pained within me, and the terrors of death are fallen upon me. Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and an horrible dread hath overwhelmed my soul." None can wrestle with death but He who overcame death, and those to whom He giveth power to overcome that king of terrors.

Whom He hath taught with the eye of faith to peruse the dark vale, and pierce its gloom, and know the bright and happy region which to them lies revealed within, though to others it be the mouth of the yawning pit. And as the man of God walks onwards through the valley, he says unto his God, "I will fear no evil, for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. My heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth, my flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption."

Now the man of God looks to the end of the race he has been patiently running, and beholds the goal at hand. He looks upon the recompense of reward which is awaiting him, the prize of his high calling in Christ Jesus. The last enemy that he has to overcome is death. The king of terrors is to be met face to face. He cannot avoid the combat if he would, and he would not if he could. How often, in the travail of his soul, hath he exclaimed, "Woe is me that I am constrained to dwell in Meshech, and to have my habitation amongst the tents of Kedar? O that I had the wings of a dove, for then would I flee away and be at rest!" How often hath he said, "In thy presence is fulness of joy, and at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore! As for me, I shall behold thy face in righteousness. When I awake I shall be satisfied with thy likeness." And now that his conflicts are about to cease for ever, and his sorrows to have an end, he lifteth up his head, because the day of his redemption draweth nigh. In vision his spirit, already winged to take its everlasting flight, discerneth the throne of God encircled by a thousand times ten thousand sons of light. In vision he mingles with the glorious throng. He tunes his harp to the heavenly theme, and sings the song of Moses and the Lamb. Sprinkled with the blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things than the blood of Abel, he ascends in spirit "to the Mount Zion, the city of the living God, making one with the innumerable company of angels, and general assembly and Church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven. Ah! how doth it grieve his soul to wake once again out of the trance of bliss, to open his eyes once again upon the dull, cold, blank realities of life.

The syren world hath no longer charms for him. He hath proved the falseness of her beauty: he hath seen the glory that excelleth, and hath no eye to look upon fictitious brightness. He hath seen the King in His beauty, and the land that is afar off: how shall he endure to soil his feet again with the base mould of the degenerate earth, to breathe any longer the polluted atmosphere of a world poisoned with sin, and full of the voices of sorrow! In this tabernacle he groans, being burdened. And when the grisly king shakes against him his terrible dart, he openeth his bosom to receive the stroke of grace, saying the while, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" And looking up to heaven, he takes his departure, saying, "Into thy hand I commend my spirit; for thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth!"

It has been our purpose to shew, by the above sketch and commentary of Christian life, that the multiplied experiences of the soul, the various states of mind through which the regenerate children of the second Adam pass, from their first entrance upon the life of faith, to the period when that life is swallowed up in light, are all exemplified in the Book of Psalms. So that the believer cannot be in any condition whether of joy or sorrow, but he will find in this book most appropriate forms of utterance, ready prepared for the expression of his feelings of whatever kind. We have only brought to light a portion of these feelings, tracing their genuine and expressive utterance, as it were with the psalmist's pen. But it would not be difficult to shew, that in the Psalms, the expressions of spiritual feeling are infinitely varied, and correspond to every emotion, and to every aspiration of the soul, quickened to the life of faith and holiness, yet groaning still under the partial bondage of a fleshly nature, exposed to the assaults of innumerable enemies, and compassed upon every side with temptation and infirmity. So that this Book is to be regarded as a spiritual world, with which the new-born spirit may converse, and acquire the knowledge and use of its faculties, as well as the knowledge and use of those objects which are revealed therein. And hence it hath a charm which it can

never lose, being associated with the simple and true affections of the spirit, and with the joy and satisfaction which attend the revelation of any new faculty within us. And this charm must grow with our growth, and strengthen with our strength; for according as we increase in spiritual strength, we are able to make more of those feelings our own; and the more we become acquainted with dialectic methods, the more we discern their difficulty and uncertainty, and desire to return to the simple impressions made upon the soul by the words of the Holy Spirit. And we reckon also that the more we advance in divine life, the simpler our discourse will become, and the more delivered from the forms of human learning, into the forms of the Spirit's teaching, until in the end, if by reason of extreme age or languor, we can say no more, we will say, as is reported of the apostle John, "Little children, love one another;" and when speech is denied as to utter anything, we will occupy our spiritual musings with some simple forms of divine truth, as the learned Baxter is reported to have said upon his death-bed, that he had been meditating all night long upon the great wisdom of the Lord's prayer and the ten commandments. So that we very much question if these Psalms, which have the charm of having unloosed to us the secrets of our own spiritual selves, may not, like a true and faithful friend, continue to add to their first loveliness and value unto the end. For, as was said in the beginning, and hath been amply illustrated, the part of our being which they take hold upon, is not our opinions or our reasonings, or any of our peculiarities, but those universal feelings of the spiritual man, which being constant in all, we have denominated *spiritual instincts;* in the abiding of which is the abiding of spiritual life, and upon the experiences of which all spiritual knowledge is built up.

While executing this sketch of spiritual experience, in order to exhibit the proper character and true value of the Book of Psalms, several questions arose to our minds besides those we touched in passing, from the consideration of which we withheld ourselves till we should have completed the main purpose of our Essay, but which cannot be omitted without leaving it

in a good measure hypothetical, and to which therefore we now address ourselves.

The first is, How far we are justified in applying to Christian life in general those feelings and expressions of feeling, which, in the first instance, pertained to individuals, and in general to one individual—David, the son of Jesse. To this we answer, that spiritual men are the only proper judges of that which is appropriate to the expression of their feelings, who, from the beginning of the Church in the days of Moses, even until now, have gathered up and preserved and appropriated these morsels of divine instruction, as they fell from the lips of the men who spake them; and that not in the Jewish Church, but in the Christian Church, and these not in latter days, but in primitive days, and the days of the Fathers, to an extent and depth of spirituality unknown in our times. The universal Church of Christ hath therefore given its witness, that these Psalms are not made for one age, but for all ages; not for one place, but for all places; not for one soul, but for all souls; time, place, and person, being only so far present in them, as to associate them with that generation to which they were first given, not to dissociate them from any other generation of spiritual children which, in after ages, was to be born to the same Spirit by the seed of the word, which liveth and abideth for ever. The temptations of David's soul, and its experiences under them, are as much the property of every saint, and of every age of the Church, as are the discourses, remonstrances, parables, and instructions of our Lord to His untoward generation—as are the arguments, and demonstrations, and Epistles of Paul to the early churches which he planted or watered. They are all equally personal, (for the Son of God himself was a person,) and the personal runneth like a thread of humanity through the heavenly hues of their discourse. They are all equally secular, and the conditions of the age are the framework upon which the tissue of the web is woven. Which presence of the personal, and intermixture of the temporary, instead of taking from the force and power of the revelations, do only apply them with the more force and power to the *personality* of every other saint, and the *peculiarity* of every other age. For, had the revela-

tions not breathed of the man who spoke them, and told of the condition of the age to which they were given, the former would have been an automaton, and the latter a looker upon the wonders which the automaton spoke; neither the one nor the other feeling any interest or concern in the marvellous display of divine art. But God wished both prophet and people to take heed, and to stand in awe of fearful issues, if they heeded not; therefore He moulded His man to His purpose, and cast him into the conditions which suited His ends, and still he was a man, acted on by course of nature, and manifest to the people as a fellow-man, through whom, indeed, they heard soul-stirring truths, uttered with ear-piercing words, and, when need was, sustained by attention-rivetting works; but still suited to their case, and thrust in their way, and spoken to their feelings, and pressed on their consciences, and rivetted there by the most mighty sanctions of life and death, present and eternal. But they are not the less spoken to us. No, not the less, on that account, spoken to us. Yet, that we might have no shadow of excuse, nor shield of self-delusion, the Lord appointed a race of prophets, or ministers, to abide until His coming, who should be gifted of His Spirit to apply the *universal* and *unchangeable*, in all His revelation, to the condition of every time, place, and individual; and so far from abandoning the *peculiarity* of the revelation, to use that no less than the other, wherever it will accommodate itself to the case in hand, and to bring it home with tenfold force by the application of the parable, "Thou, even thou thyself, art the very man"—this, even this, is the very season—this, even this in which we live, is the very condition to which this revelation was given. We do admire how this automaton-inspiration can stand a thought, when it is the very RULE of heaven's communications, that in every word of God there should be a *humanity* as well as a *divinity* present. And as the Word which was in the beginning took not voice—nor intelligence, but flesh, human flesh, and the fulness of the Godhead was manifested *bodily*; so, when that same Word came unto the fathers by the prophets, and discovered a part of His fulness, it was through their flesh or their humanity, that is, through their present conditions of spirit, and mind, and body, and

outward estate, that He discovered Himself to the flesh or the humanity of the people; that is, their present conditions of spirit, and body, and outward estate. Whence, if it be said that Moses was Christ under the veil, and if Paul says of himself, that not he but Christ lived in him, then it may be said that David was the humiliation and the exaltation of the Church under the veil.

Now, as the apostle, in writing to the Hebrews concerning the priesthood of Christ, calls upon them to consider Melchizedek, his solitary majesty, and singular condition, and remarkable honour; so call we upon the Church to consider David, the son of Jesse, his unexampled accumulation of gifts, his wonderful variety of conditions, his spiritual riches and his spiritual desolation, and the multifarious contingencies of his life; with his faculty, his unrivalled faculty of expressing the emotions of his soul, under all the days of brightness and days of darkness which passed over his head. For thereby shall the Church understand how this the lawgiver of her devotion was prepared by God for the work which he accomplished, and how it hath happened that one man should have brought forth that vast variety of experience, in which every soul rejoiceth to find itself reflected. For Moses was not more prepared by all the wisdom and learning of Egypt, for becoming a fit vehicle to carry from God unto the people an institution of law, than David was prepared, by the experiences of his life between the sheepcot and the throne, for becoming a fit vehicle to carry from God unto His Church, an institution of spiritual experience, and devotional feeling.

And we the more gladly enter upon the education and gifts of this saint, the great revealer of the moods of the renewed soul, that we may ashame or silence the Rabshekas who rail upon this great type of Messiah's humiliation and exaltation, the man after God's own heart. We call upon the Church, and all reasonable men, to consider this man David, how well furnished he was by nature, and educated by providence, for the great honour to which the Christian Church hath preferred him.

There never was a specimen of manhood, so rich and ennobled as David, the son of Jesse, whom other saints haply may have equalled in single features of his character, but such a

combination of manly, heroic qualities, such a flush of generous godlike excellences, hath never yet been seen embodied in a single man. His Psalms, to speak as a man, do place him in the highest rank of lyrical poets, as they set him above all the inspired writers of the Old Testament,—equalling in sublimity the flights of Isaiah himself, and revealing the cloudy mystery of Ezekiel; but in love of country, and gloryings in its heavenly patronage, surpassing them all. And where are there such expressions of the varied conditions into which human nature is cast by the accidents of providence,—such delineations of deep affliction, and inconsolable anguish, and anon such joy, such rapture, such revelry of emotion, in the worship of the living God! Such invocations to all nature, animate and inanimate, such summonings of the hidden powers of harmony, and of the breathing instruments of melody! Single hymns of this poet would have conferred immortality upon any mortal, and borne down his name as one of the most favoured of the sons of men.

But it is not the writings of the man which strike us with such wonder, as the actions and events of his wonderful history. He was a hero without a peer, bold in battle, and generous in victory; by distress, or by triumph, never overcome. Though hunted like a wild beast among the mountains, and forsaken like a pelican in the wilderness, by the country whose armies he had delivered from disgrace, and by the monarch whose daughter he had won,—whose son he had bound to him with cords of brotherly love, and whose own soul he was wont to charm with the sacredness of his minstrelsy,—he never indulged malice or revenge against his unnatural enemies. Twice, at the peril of his life, he brought his blood-hunter within his power, and twice he spared him, and would not be persuaded to injure a hair upon his head—who, when he fell in his high plans, was lamented over by David, with the bitterness of a son, and his death avenged upon the sacrilegious man who had lifted his sword against the Lord's anointed. In friendship and love, and also in domestic affection, he was not less notable than in heroical endowments; and in piety towards God he was most remarkable of all. He had to flee from his bed-chamber in the dead of night, his friendly meetings had to

be concerted upon the perilous edge of captivity and death—his food he had to seek at the risk of sacrilege—for a refuge from death, to cast himself upon the people of Gath—to counterfeit idiocy, and become the laughing-stock of his enemies. And who shall tell of his hidings in the cave of Adullam, and of his wanderings in the wilderness of Ziph; in the weariness of which he had power to stand before his armed enemy with all his host, and, by the generosity of his deeds, and the affectionate language which flowed from his lips, to melt into child-like weeping the obdurate spirit of king Saul, which had the nerve to evoke the spirits of the dead!

King David was a man extreme in all his excellences—a man of the highest strain, whether for counsel, for expression, or for action, in peace and in war, in exile and on the throne. That such a warm and ebullient spirit should have given way before the tide of its affections, we wonder not. We rather wonder that, tried by such extremes, his mighty spirit should not often have burst control, and enacted right forward the conqueror, the avenger, and the destroyer. But God, who anointed him from his childhood, had given him store of the best natural and inspired gifts, which preserved him from sinking under the long delay of his promised crown, and kept him from contracting any of the craft or cruelty of a hunted, persecuted man. And adversity did but bring out the splendour of his character, which might have slumbered like the fire in the flint, or the precious metal in the dull and earthy ore.

But to conceive aright of the gracefulness and strength of king David's character, we must draw him into comparison with men similarly conditioned, and then shall we see how vain the world is to cope with him. Conceive a man who had saved his country, and clothed himself with gracefulness and renown in the sight of all the people, by the chivalry of his deeds won for himself intermarriage with the royal line, and by unction of the Lord's prophet been set apart to the throne itself; such a one conceive driven with fury from house and hold, and, through tedious years, deserted of every stay but heaven, with no soothing sympathies of quiet life, harassed for ever between famine and the edge of the sword, and kept in

savage holds and deserts: and tell us, in the annals of men, of one so disappointed, so bereaved and straitened, maintaining not fortitude alone, but sweet composure and a heavenly frame of soul, inditing praise to no avenging deity, and couching songs in no revengful mood, according with his outcast and unsocial life; but inditing praises to the God of mercy, and songs which soar into the third heavens of the soul: not, indeed, without the burst of sorrow, and the complaint of solitariness, and prophetic warnings to his bloodthirsty foes, but ever closing in sweet preludes of good to come, and desire of present contentment. Find us such a one in the annals of men, and we yield the argument of this controversy. Men there have been, driven before the wrath of kings to wander outlaws and exiles, whose musings and actings have been recorded to us in the minstrelsy of our native land. Draw these songs of the exile into comparison with the Psalms of David, and know the spirit of the man after God's own heart: the stern defiance of the one, with the tranquil acquiescence of the other; the deep despair of the one, with the rooted trust of the other; the vindictive imprecations of the one, with the tender regret and forgiveness of the other. Shew us an outlaw who never spoiled a country which had forsaken him, nor turned his hand in self-defence or revenge upon his persecutors, who used the vigour of his arm only against the enemies of his country, yea, lifted up his arm in behalf of that mother, which had cast her son, crowned with salvation, away from her bosom, and held him at a distance from her love, and raised the rest of her family to hunt him to the death;—in the defence of that thankless, unnatural, mother-country, find us such a repudiated son lifting up his arm, and spending its vigour, in smiting and utterly discomfiting her enemies, whose spoils he kept not to enrich himself and his ruthless followers, but dispensed to comfort her and her happier children. Find us among the Themistocles, and Coriolani, and Cromwells, and Napoleons of the earth, such a man, and we will yield the argument of this controversy which we maintain for the peerless son of Jesse.

But we fear that not such another man is to be found in the recorded annals of men. Though he rose from the peasantry

to fill the throne, and enlarge the borders of his native land, he gave himself neither to ambition nor to glory; though more basely treated than the sons of men, he gave not place to despondency or revenge; though of the highest genius in poetry, he gave it not licence to sing his own deeds, nor to depict loose and licentious life, nor to ennoble any worldly sentiment or attachment of the human heart, however virtuous or honourable, but constrained it to sing the praises of God, and the victories of the right hand of the Lord of Hosts, and his admirable works which are of old from everlasting. And he hath dressed out religion in such a rich and beautiful garment of divine poesy as beseemeth her majesty, in which, being arrayed, she can stand up before the eyes even of her enemies, in more royal state, than any personification of love, or glory, or pleasure, to which highly gifted mortals have devoted their genius.

The force of his character was vast, and the scope of his life was immense. His harp was full-stringed, and every angel of joy and of sorrow swept over the chords as he passed; but the melody always breathed of heaven. And such oceans of affection lay within his breast, as could not always slumber in their calmness. For the hearts of a hundred men strove and struggled together within the narrow continent of his single heart: and will the scornful men have no sympathy for one so conditioned, but scorn him, because he ruled not with constant quietness, the unruly host of divers natures which dwelt within his single soul? Of self-command surely he will not be held deficient, who endured Saul's javelin to be so often launched at him, while the people without were ready to hail him king; who endured all bodily hardships, and taunts of his enemies, when revenge was in his hand; and ruled his desperate band like a company of saints, and restrained them from their country's injury. But that he should not be able to enact all characters without a fault, the simple shepherd, the conquering hero, and the romantic lover; the perfect friend; the innocent outlaw, and the royal monarch; the poet, the prophet, and the regenerator of the Church; and, withal, the *man*, the *man* of vast soul, who played not these parts by turns, but was the original of them all, and wholly

present in them all; oh! that he should have fulfilled this high priesthood of humanity, this universal ministry of manhood without an error, were more than human. With the defence of his backslidings, which he hath himself more keenly scrutinised, more clearly decerned against, and more bitterly lamented than any of his censors, we do not charge ourselves, because they were, in a manner, necessary, that he might be the full-orbed man which was needed to utter every form of spiritual feeling: but if, when of these acts he became convinced, he be found less true to God, and to righteousness; indisposed to repentance and sorrow, and anguish; exculpatory of himself; stout-hearted in his courses, a formalist in his penitence, or in any way less worthy of a spiritual man in those than in the rest of his infinite moods, then, verily, strike him from the canon, and let his Psalms become monkish legends, or what you please. But if these penitential Psalms discover the soul's deepest hell of agony, and lay bare the iron ribs of misery, whereon the very heart dissolveth, and if they, expressing the same in words which melt the soul that conceiveth, and bow the head that uttereth them, then, we say, let us keep these records of the psalmist's grief and despondency, as the most precious of his utterances, and sure to be needed in the case of every man who essayeth to live a spiritual life. For, though the self-satisfied moralist, and the diligent Pharisee, and all that pigmy breed of purists, who make unto themselves a small and puny theory of life, and please their meagre souls with the idea of keeping it thoroughly, smiting upon their thigh, and protesting by their unsullied honour and inviolate truth, and playing other tricks of self-sufficiency, will little understand what we are about to say, we will, nevertheless, for truth's sake, utter it; that, until a man, however pure, honest, and honourable he may have thought himself, and been thought by others, discovereth himself to be utterly fallen, defiled, and sinful in the sight of God, a worm of the earth and no man, his soul cleaving to the dust, and bearing about with it a body of sin and death; and until, for expressions of his utter worthlessness, he seek those Psalms in which the psalmist describes the abasement of his soul, yea, and can make them his own, that

man hath not known the beginnings of the spiritual life within the soul: for (let him that readeth understand) a man must break up before there is any hope of him; he must be contrite and broken in spirit, before the Lord will dwell with him.

Of all the delusions with which Satan lulls man into sweet security, this of our completeness and integrity is the most fatal. While we dwell in the idea of our rectitude, our unsullied purity, our inflexible honesty, our truth, our moral worth, and think that we implement any, the lowest, of God's commandments, (but they are all equally high,) we are like the hard and baked earth, whose surface haply some sward of greenness may cover, but which will not wave with the rich and fruitful harvest, until you bury that first crop of nature under the share of the plough, and turn up the black rough mould to the heat of the sun, and the genial action of the air, and, the ancient roots being scorched up, sow it anew with precious seed, and wait upon the same with diligent husbandry. When this soul-tillage hath taken place, and the integrity of selfishness is broken up, and the poisonous weeds of selfishness are cut down, and our shallow and insufficient righteousness trodden under foot; when the old man hath broken into pieces, and we feel ourselves murderers, adulterers, thieves, liars, in the sight of God, then shall we come to use, and thank God that we have at hand, the penitential Psalms of David; the confessions, the groanings, the languishings of the desolate king of Israel. It booteth not that we have not committed the acts, we wanted power, we wanted opportunity, we wanted means; but ah! we wanted not will. It was in our heart, out of which proceed murders, adulteries, thefts, false witness. It hath been all the while in our heart, and we knew it not. It was rooted there, and we fostered it. Ay, and it will cause us bitter groans, ere it will leave the place of its roots.

But to return from these rebukes of the scorners, to the instruction of the Christian Church upon the fitness of David to be their psalmist.—Why were such oceans of feeling poured unto David's soul, such true and graceful utterance of poetry infused into his lips, and such skill of music seated in his right hand? Such oceans of feeling did God infuse into his

soul, and such utterance of poetry He placed between his lips, and such skilful music He seated in his right hand, in order that he might conceive forms of feeling for all saints, and create an everlasting psalmody, and hand down an organ for expressing the melody of the renewed soul. The Lord did not intend that His Church should be without a rule for uttering its gladness and its glory, its lamentation and its grief; and to bring such a rule and institute into being, He raised up His servant David, as formerly He raised up Moses to give to the Church an institute of Law. And to that end He led him the round of all human conditions, that he might catch the spirit proper to every one, and utter it according to truth; He allowed him not to curtail his being by treading the round of one function, but by every variety of functions, He cultivated his whole being, and filled his soul with wisdom and feeling. He found him objects for every affection, that the affection might not slumber and die. He brought him up in the sheep-pastures, that the groundwork of his character might be laid amongst the simple and universal forms of feeling. He took him to the camp, and made him a conqueror, that he might be filled with nobleness of soul and ideas of glory. He placed him in the palace, that he might be filled with ideas of majesty and sovereign might. He carried him to the wilderness, and placed him in solitudes, that his soul might dwell alone in the sublime conceptions of God, and His mighty works; and He kept him there for long years, with only one step between him and death, that he might be well schooled to trust and depend upon the providence of God. And in none of these various conditions and avocations of life, did He take away from him His Holy Spirit. His trials were but the tuning of the instrument with which the Spirit might express the various melodies which He designed to utter by him for the consolation and edification of spiritual men. It was the education of the man most appropriate for the divine vocation of the man. John the Baptist being to be used for rough work, was trained in the rough desert; Paul being to be used for contentious and learned work, was trained at Gamaliel's feet; Daniel being to be used for judgment and revelation, was trained in the

wisdom of the east; Joseph being to be used as a providence to Egypt and his father's house, was trained in the hardest school of providence; and every one hath been disciplined by the providence of God, as well as furnished in the fountains of his being, for that particular work for which the Spirit of God designed him. Therefore, David had that brilliant galaxy of natural gifts, that rich and varied education, in order to fit him for executing the high office to which he was called by the Spirit, of giving to the Church those universal forms of spiritual feeling, whereof we have been endeavouring to set forth the excellent applications. And though we neither excuse his acts of wickedness, nor impute them to the temptation of God, who cannot be tempted of evil, neither tempteth any man, we will also add, that by his loss the Church hath gained; and that out of the evil of his ways, much good hath been made to arise; and that if he had not passed through every valley of humiliation, and stumbled upon the dark mountains, we should not have had a language for the souls of the penitent, or an expression for the dark troubles which compass the soul, that feareth to be deserted by its God. So much for the fitness of the psalmist to have been made the organ of spiritual feeling unto the Church.

There is another question which remains for resolution, before bringing this Essay to a close: in how far commentators are justified in referring so much of these Psalms to Messiah.

In maintaining for these Psalms the high place which the universal voice of the Christian Church hath assigned to them, there is a tendency to pass into the extreme of applying them wholly to Christ, and finding some experience of Christ's soul in every experience of the psalmist's soul. Now, while it is true, that all of these psalms are still applicable to the saints and to the Church, because the saints and the Church are still compassed about with the same fleshly nature and worldly dispositions, liable to the same backslidings, idolatries, and oppositions as heretofore, none of them which confess transgression, and lament over indwelling sin, are at any time applicable unto Christ, who suffered indeed as David and all his seed have suffered from the plottings of the world, and the

enmity of the devil, and was in all points tempted as they are, —yet without sin, without sliding back, without opposing Himself to His Father, without yielding to the temptation; wherefore, it is little short of blasphemy to apply unto the spotless and blameless Saviour, any or all of those spiritual experiences, any or all of those deep self-accusations, any or all of those entreaties for forgiveness which compose so large a portion of the Psalms of David, and the spiritual utterances of David's seed. Surely no spiritual man in these times would apply to Christ his personal experiences of sin and sorrow for sin. No more can the psalmist's be applied unto Christ, without confounding the workings of the first Adam with the workings of the second Adam, and destroying all those distinctions between good and evil, which it is the end of revelation to define and demonstrate. The workings of the second Adam, by which we become convinced of sin, and desirous of holiness, separate from the world, and hated of it, united to God, and beloved of Him, are in us as in David, all derived from Christ, and will apply to Christ's own experience in the flesh. For the word of God manifested in the Son of Mary, is the same word of God which came by the Spirit unto the prophets, and which is applied by the Spirit unto us who believe, who are only members of Christ suffering and enjoying with our living and life-giving Head. And, therefore, we may well apply to Him, what by His Spirit is revealed in us. But that other part within us which holdeth of the first Adam, and which lusteth against the Spirit, loveth the world, and with all its instincts warreth against God, whose evil deeds a Christian, if he speak truth, must constantly confess, and seek grace to overcome;—to apply any of the foul deeds, or wicked experiences thereof unto Christ, is a wonderful blindness which hath come over certain holy men in the Church, from their eagerness to find Christ everywhere in these consecrated songs.

And yet the path to this error is open, and very easily fallen upon. For in those Psalms which have been applied in the New Testament unto Christ, it is found difficult, if not impossible, to separate the psalmist's personal experience from that of Christ, or to find how, without much violence, they can be wholly appropriate to Messiah. Now, with as little strain-

ing of interpretation, they judge that another and another, and at length all may be applied to Christ, in a typical, or in a real signification. But this is to err from ignorance of the prophetic Scriptures. Except the prophecies of Daniel, and the prophecies of the Apocalypse, and one or two of the visions of Esdras, (especially that of the three-headed ten-feathered eagle,) the other prophecies are always of a mixed character, belonging partly to the times, and partly surpassing the conditions of the times, and occasionally glancing through to the very end of time. So that in Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the other prophets, even in our Lord's prophecies of His second coming, and the apostles' constant reference thereto, you cannot by any endeavour make a clear separation between that which was then fulfilled, or hath been since fulfilled, and that which still standeth over to be fulfilled. The reason of which, doubtless, is explained by our Lord, that the times and the seasons the Father hath kept in His own power, so that even the Son himself was not permitted to reveal them. And Peter saith, that the prophets inquired diligently, but could not discover what and what manner of things the Spirit which was in them did signify. And I doubt not that the apostles might themselves be as ignorant of the time of the second coming of Christ, as the prophets were of His first coming. Which taken together is an illustration of this great law, which may be gathered from the very face of the prophetic writings, That they arose by the suggestion of some condition of the Church, present in the days of the prophets, as the particular case, but passing beyond this in time, and passing beyond it in aggravation of every circumstance, they give, as it were, a consecutive glance of all the like cases, and kindred passages in the history of the Church, and bring out the general law of God's providence and grace in the present, and in all the future parallel cases;—yet with such mark of different times interspersed as may be sufficient, by a skilful comparison with the exact and historical prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation, to draw the attention of the wise to their coming, and suffice to the conviction of the unwise when they are past. Of this great law of prophetic writing, the confusion of David and Messiah in the Psalms referred to, are only one

instance. David's prophecies of Messiah which are *personal*, arose by suggestion of the Spirit, from his own *personal* experiences, and include it. His prophecies of Messiah, which are *royal* and *kingly*, arose out of his kingly experience, and the two persons are interwoven with one another in such a manner as not to be separable, just as in the other prophecies, the first, and second, and third events to which they have reference, are, in like manner, interwoven.

Which so far from being an evil, is a great beauty in the Psalms; so far from being an inconvenience, is a great advantage to those who understand aright. In connecting David with Messiah, it connects the Church and every particular saint who adopts David's feelings with Messiah, the children with their parent, the subjects with their king; so that we cannot sing his praise or his triumphs, but we must take ourselves in as a part, and be embraced in the very praises of our great Head, and are not permitted to separate ourselves from Him; but at once are we constrained to worship the *objective* Saviour, who is at the right hand of God; and the *subjective* Saviour, who is in us; the *objective* Saviour who humbled Himself to the cross, and the *subjective* Saviour who humbled Himself to behold and redeem His servant; the *objective* Saviour who ascended up on high, leading captivity captive, and the *subjective* Saviour who in us hath triumphed over death, and raised us to newness of life, who liveth with us and is seated in the throne of our hearts. Which happy blending of our spiritual nature, suffering or enjoying with Christ suffering or enjoying, we should have lost, had we been able to separate between David and Christ in those Psalms which have a reference to Christ. For at one time we should have sung objectively of Christ, and at another subjectively of ourselves, as represented in David, and so lost the intermarriage of the object with the subject, which is the true propagation of religion in the soul;—a loss this which the Christians are beginning to experience in those modern hymns which are coming into use, and those metrical versions which have the boldness to paraphrase the Psalms, and new-model them to the present times, (a most daring innovation upon a book of Scripture.) Therefore, while we reject the puerile conceit, and

most mischievous dogma which would make every word of these Psalms to be applicable to Christ, we feel greatly indebted to any commentator, who, preserving sound principles of interpretation, can find the Saviour present in the Psalms, which is to give not only more sacredness and spirituality to them, but to increase that happy blending of subjective and objective religion, which is the best condition for true and spiritual worship.

MISSIONARIES AFTER THE APOSTOLICAL SCHOOL.

DEDICATION

TO

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE, ESQ.

MY DEAR AND HONOURED FRIEND,

UNKNOWN as you are, in the true character either of your mind or of your heart, to the greater part of your countrymen, and misrepresented as your works have been by those who have the ear of the vulgar, it will seem wonderful to many that I should make choice of you, from the circle of my friends, to dedicate to you these beginnings of my thoughts upon the most important subject of these or any times. And when I state the reason to be, that you have been more profitable to my faith in orthodox doctrine, to my spiritual understanding of the word of God, and to my right conception of the Christian Church, than any or all of the men with whom I have entertained friendship and conversation, it will perhaps still more astonish the mind and stagger the belief of those who have adopted, as once I did myself, the misrepresentations which are purchased for a hire and vended for a price, concerning your character and works. You have only to shut your ear to what they ignorantly say of you, and earnestly to meditate the deep thoughts with which you are instinct, and give them a suitable body and form that they may live, then silently commit them to the good sense of ages yet to come, in order to be ranked hereafter amongst the most gifted sages and greatest benefactors of your country. Enjoy and occupy the quiet which, after many trials, the providence of God hath bestowed upon

you in the bosom of your friends; and may you be spared until you have made known the multitude of your thoughts unto those who at present value, or shall hereafter arise to value, their worth.

I have partaken so much high intellectual enjoyment from being admitted into the close and familiar intercourse with which you have honoured me, and your many conversations concerning the revelations of the Christian faith have been so profitable to me in every sense, as a student and a preacher of the gospel, as a spiritual man and a Christian pastor, and your high intelligence and great learning have at all times so kindly stooped to my ignorance and inexperience, that not merely with the affection of friend to friend, and the honour due from youth to experienced age, but with the gratitude of a disciple to a wise and generous teacher, of an anxious inquirer to the good man who hath helped him in the way of truth, I do now presume to offer you the first-fruits of my mind since it received a new impulse towards truth, and a new insight into its depths from listening to your discourse. Accept them in good part, and be assured, that however insignificant in themselves, they are the offering of a heart which loves your heart, and of a mind which looks up with reverence to your mind.

EDWARD IRVING.

PREFACE.

HAVING been requested by the London Missionary Society to preach upon the occasion of their last anniversary, I willingly complied, without much thought of what I was undertaking; but when I came to reflect upon the sacredness and importance of the cause given into my hands, and the dignity of the audience before which I had to discourse, it seemed to my conscience that I had undertaken a duty full of peril and responsibility, for which I ought to prepare myself with every preparation of the mind and of the spirit. To this end, retiring into the quiet and peaceful country, among a society of men devoted to every good and charitable work, I searched the Scriptures in secret; and in their pious companies conversed of the convictions which were secretly brought to my mind concerning the missionary work. And thus, not without much prayer to God and self-devotion, I meditated those things which I delivered in public before the reverend and pious men who had honoured me with so great a trust.

At that time I had no design whatever of giving to my thoughts any wider publicity, and was prepared to resist any application which might haply be made to me to do so; but an application presented itself from a quarter which I was not prepared to resist,—my own sympathies with a heart-broken widow, the widow of John Smith, the missionary, who had died in prison under a sentence of death, which the good sense and good feeling of England united in pronouncing to be *unjust*. Inasmuch as he suffered unjustly, I viewed him as a martyr, though condemned, like his Lord, with a *show* of law. And being unable in any other way to testify my sense of his injuries, and my feeling of the duty of the Christian Church to support his widow, I resolved that I would do so by devoting to her use this fruit of my mind and spirit. Thus moved, I gave notice that I

would publish the discourse, and give the proceeds of the sale into her hands.

When again I came to meditate upon this second engagement which I had come under, and took into consideration the novelty of the doctrine which I was about to promulgate, I set myself to examine the whole subject anew, and opened my ear to every objection which I could hear from any quarter, nothing repelled by the uncharitable constructions and ridiculous accounts which were often rendered of my views. The effect of which was to convince me that the doctrine which I had advanced was true, but of so novel and unpalatable a character, that if it was to do any good, or even to live, it must be brought before the public with a more minute investigation of the Scriptures, and fuller development of reason, than could be contained within the compass of a single discourse. To give it this more convincing and more living form, was the occupation of my little leisure from pastoral and ministerial duties, rendered still less, during the summer months, by the indifference of my bodily health. And it was not until the few weeks of rest and recreation which I enjoyed in the autumn, that I was able to perceive the true form and full extent of the argument which is necessary to make good my position. Which things I mention, in order to explain the delay which has taken place in the publication.

The doctrine, of which I have convinced myself out of the Scriptures, and which I propose by the grace of God to demonstrate and commend, in a series of orations, is contained in the tenth chapter of Matthew, the sixth chapter of Mark, the ninth and tenth chapters of Luke; which text I have prefixed to the work under the name of "THE MISSIONARY CHARTER." The twelve apostles and seventy disciples, acting upon this commission, I consider as a school of missionaries, from which we should take the character of the missionary, the nature of his qualifications, and the methods of his proceeding, with the same exactness with which we take the character of a pastor and the nature of his duties, the character of a private Christian and the nature of his duties, from the other constitutions of the Lord and His apostles: and under this conviction, I have entitled my work, "FOR MISSIONARIES AFTER THE APOSTOLICAL SCHOOL." Of how many addresses the work will consist, I am not able at present to determine, but the plan of it, as well as the occasion, is fully contained in the Introduction, which I have entitled "THE OCCASION AND METHOD OF THE ADDRESSES."

This is the age of expediency, both in the Church and out of the

Church, and all institutions are modelled upon the principles of expediency, and carried into effect by the rules of prudence. I remember, in this metropolis, to have heard it uttered with great applause in a public meeting, where the heads and leaders of the religious world were present, "If I were asked what was the first qualification for a missionary, I would say, Prudence; and what the second? Prudence; and what the third? still I would answer, Prudence." I trembled while I heard, not with indignation but with horror and apprehension, what the end would be of a spirit which I have since found to be the presiding genius of our activity, the ruler of the ascendant. Now, if I read the eleventh chapter of St Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews, I find that from the time of Abel to the time of Christ, it was by *faith* that the cloud of witnesses witnessed their good confession and so mightily prevailed; which faith is there defined the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen; whereas *prudence* or *expediency* is the substance of things present, the evidence of things seen. So that faith and prudence are opposite poles in the soul, the one attracting to it all things spiritual and divine, the other all things sensual and earthy. This expediency hath banished the soul of patriotic eloquence from our senate, the spirit of high equity from our legislation, self-denying wisdom from our philosophy, and of our poetry it hath clipt the angel wing and forced it to creep along the earth. And if we look not to it, it will strangle faith and make void the reality of the things which are not seen, which are the only things that are real and cannot be removed. Money, money, money, is the universal cry. Mammon hath gotten the victory, and may say triumphantly, (nay, he may keep silence and the servants of Christ will say it for him,) "Without me ye can do nothing."

This evil bent of prudence to become the death of all ideal and invisible things, whether poetry, sentiment, heroism, disinterestedness, or faith, it is the great prerogative of religious faith to withstand, because religious faith is the only form of the *ideal* which hath the assurance from heaven of a present blessing and an everlasting reward. Poetry is a tender delicate plant, which seeketh solitary culture, and ill endureth the rough handling of utility. And sentiment is a flower which vanisheth into beautiful colours and sweet odours, that moment it is placed by the side of politics and economics and chrestomathics, and such other thistle-like productions of the mind, (if indeed they belong not rather to the sense.) And heroism and patriotism and virtue, and other forms of disinterestedness, having no exchangeable value in the market-place, must keep at home in books or be shewn only in family

circles, like the antiquated dresses of our grandfathers and grandmothers, with whom the things so named were in fashion. But *faith* is born to brave contempt, to defy power, to bear persecution, and endure the loss of all things. And in doing so, faith will overthrow the idol of expediency, and recover those heavenly and angelic forms of the natural man,—poetry, sentiment, honour, patriotism, and virtue,—which the worshippers of the idol have offered at the idol's shrine.

And truth will not retaliate upon prudence the evil aim which she hath bent against her and all her daughters: but, upon the other hand, will bestow even upon prudence a heavenly form. For faith is the substance of things hoped for, and therefore is ever looking onward; it is the evidence of things unseen, and is therefore ever looking beyond the present. Futurity is its dwelling-place. And, therefore, as it grows in the soul, it makes it full of forecast and consideration. And forecast and consideration being in the soul, it must be prudent, provident and prudent, with a true wisdom, which, making its calculations for eternity, applies them also to time. Hence it is written, that godliness hath the promise of the life that now is, as well as of the life that is to come. Hence, also, the moment you make a poor man religious, you make him sober and economical and prudent. Hence, also, the most faithful and religious nation upon the earth, is also the most prudent and prosperous on the earth. So that prudence, in the end, will grow upon that same stem whereon grow poetry, sentiment, honour, patriotism, virtue, and every other form of invisible truth,—upon the stem of that tree whose leaves are for the healing of the nations.

If you thus make a stand for the dignity of faith alone, and shew, out of the Scriptures, what in all ages it hath accomplished for the well-being of man, in the teeth of expediency and power and wealth, by no ministry or help but that of all-prevailing truth; lo! even the faithful rise upon you like locusts and cry, But these Scripture-men had miracles, and were the mighty power of God; what are we that we should liken ourselves to them? They have their refuge in the physical power of a miracle,—another form of the doctrine of expediency, which must have a solution of every difficulty from the visible. The consistency of the Christian doctrine with everlasting truth is nothing; the more than chivalrous, the divine intrepidity and disinterestedness of its teachers is nothing; the response of every conscience to the word of the preacher is nothing; the promise of God's Spirit is nothing; it is all to be resolved by the visible work, the outward show of a miracle. This was the only point on which

the gospel came into contact with the visible; and expediency having corrupted the mind of this age, to look for the cause and effect of everything in the visible, they at once cry out with one voice, The gospel owed its success in the first ages wholly to this, or to this almost wholly; but for us we must accommodate ourselves to the absence of these supernatural means, and go about the work in a reasonable prudent way, if we would succeed in it; calculate it as the merchant does an adventure; set it forth as the statesman doth a colony; raise the ways and means within the year, and expend them within the year; and so go on as long as we can get our accounts to balance.

Into this exaggeration of miracles, out of which I foresee the chief objection to the doctrine of the addresses now published, I enter not further at present, having the whole subject before me in the next head of discourse, to which I shall address myself as soon as leisure is afforded me, and in which I shall do my endeavour to put the question of the primitive success of the gospel upon its proper basis,—the character of the doctrine and the character of the preachers of the doctrine. The Jews required a sign, (that is, miracles,) and the Greeks sought after wisdom, but it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

This unfounded reference of everything peculiar to the primitive times, to the influence of miracles, not only draws an impassable gulf betwixt our sympathies and the actions of Christ and the apostles, making their example of little or none effect, but it hath brought in the notion that certain offices have altogether ceased in the Church; and to many cradled in these current ideas, it will seem little short of blasphemy in me to have referred the modern missionaries to the apostles as their only patterns. And the same horror would arise in pious minds, if I were to say that the preacher here at home is no other office than that of the ancient prophet to the land of Israel. And yet both these positions I have the hardihood to assert, and hope to be able to demonstrate to the Church. Those five offices mentioned by the apostle in the Epistle to the Ephesians, "apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers," are not offices for a time but for all times, denoting the five great divisions of duty necessary for the prosperity of the Church; "apostles," those sent out to preach the gospel unto the people who know it not; "prophets," those who are to prophesy in the midst of the people who know it but obey it not, to call them to repentance, and to read out their doom if they repent not; "evangelists," those who are to build up in knowledge and faith, comfort and charity, those who already do believe the gospel; "pastors,"

those who are shepherds over a flock, and guide every one in the way, teaching them from house to house, and communing with their souls; "teachers," or doctors, whose office, according to the second book of the Discipline of the Church of Scotland, is "to open up the mind of the Spirit of God in the Scriptures, simply, without such application as the ministers use, to the end that the faithful may be instructed, and sound doctrine taught, and that the purity of the gospel be not corrupted through ignorance or evil opinions." These five offices arise out of the everlasting necessities of the Church. When there are no heathen, the apostolic office will decease; when there are no lukewarm, backsliding, or rebellious hearers and professors of the truth, the prophetic office will cease; and when there are no popular prejudices of ignorance, or heresies of error, or learned oppositions, the office of the doctor will cease; and then there will be no need save of the evangelist and the pastor. But as this bright period is remote, and the heathen abound upon the earth, and those who have but a name to live abound in Christendom, and almost every learned man is a professed or disguised disbeliever and gainsayer, these offices must continue to exist, and officers must arise to bear them, whether they assume the name or not; otherwise the Church will contract her limits, and grow full of spots and wrinkles and blemishes and corruptions. The miraculous endowments of all these offices have ceased, because there is no longer any occasion for them, (the external healings, which were like fruit before the harvest, being superseded by the fruits of health and blessedness, which the gospel hath produced, not upon individuals, but upon nations and generations; the internal powers of understanding and discourse being superseded by the thing understood and discoursed of, which we have in the writings of the apostles.) The miraculous gifts, whether external or internal, have brought themselves to an end; but the use and purpose of these offices as surely remain as the use and purpose of the evangelical minister and the faithful pastor remain. And if our churches were in full possession of the Spirit of Christ, they would order themselves and their operations after these five divisions of the Christian ministry. Indeed, they are beginning to do so imperceptibly. Every Church and body of dissenters have already reconstituted the apostolic office in the missionary; the office of the preacher or prophet is also beginning to separate from the office of pastor in our great cities, (pity that it were at the expense of the latter,) and the office of evangelist is well sustained by what are called the evangelical clergy, (pity that they did not address themselves also to the pastoral and prophetic offices;) the

doctors should be in the universities and schools of learning, as is well set forth in the fifth chapter of the second book of Discipline; and, for pastors, they are to be found, still in ancient simplicity and faithfulness, in many parishes of the North. Whether it be possible for one man to discharge these four offices of the Church, I know not; but this I know, that any one of them is a sufficient field for the faculties and energies of the most able and active man.

Into these matters of ecclesiastical polity it may be thought out of place to have entered here, but it is important to have communicated in this short and simple way the leading idea of this discourse concerning doctrine, which is intended to bring back the missionary to the apostolical office, to restore the gospel messenger to his dignity of place, to give him back his charter and prerogative, to deliver him into the liberty of his office out of the hands of whomsoever would enthral it, to make him the servant of our common Lord, the dependent of our common Father, the mouth and voice of our common Spirit, subordinate to nothing upon the earth save the authority of the Church which ordained him, and the law of the gospel verity. Though published separately, in order to redeem my pledge to the public and gratify the feeling out of which the pledge was given, it contains a full development of the missionary constitution and a demonstration of its perpetuity, and therefore is complete in itself, though only a fragment of the whole discourse; which I shall be the better able to address to the conditions of the present time, when I shall have gathered the judgment of the churches upon the doctrine, through their several public organs of opinion.

Now, if the members and managers of missionary societies think that I entertain towards them any feelings but those of brotherhood in the work in which they labour, they deceive themselves and disbelieve my declarations. It is amongst the pleasantest recollections of my early years, that in my youth their cause was the subject of my prayers and the end of my secret savings; that many years before I reached man's estate, I was chosen the manager of one of the country Bible societies, and one of the country missionary societies of Scotland; that I afterwards filled the office of secretary to the two chief societies in the most populous city of Scotland; in all which offices I had the approbation of the societies entered on their minutes. And it is now a continual subject of regret to me, that the duties of the ministerial and pastoral office, to which I am ordained, leave me no time for serving their most noble cause, otherwise than by the silent and secret meditation of these unworthy thoughts. That I consider

their plans imperfect and immature, is, I trust, no more than they do themselves. That I search the Scriptures for light, is, I trust, no more than they do themselves. That I make known to others the knowledge which is revealed unto my mind, is no more than they do in every one of their publications. Therefore, let them take me to be, as indeed I am, a true friend to the work in which they are engaged; and let them judge me in the spirit of love, not of bitterness or strife.

My desire and prayer for every missionary society which is embodied, for every mission which is undertaken, for every missionary who adventures from the bosom of his home, for the sake of the gospel of Christ and the salvation of the unbelieving nations, is, that they may prosper to the ends of the earth. If I forget them in my prayers, private and public, may my right hand forget her cunning; if I fail to contribute my mite to their support, may the Lord's providence cease to provide for me and mine. Nay, but more, I will think for their sake, and meditate my inmost thoughts for their success. My mind, as well as my soul, belongeth to Christ, my Creator and Redeemer, and unto His cause they are due and are devoted. And in this spirit I do now pray to Him, to save or destroy, to prosper or blast, these first-fruits of many thoughts, according as they are fitted to advance or to retard the glory of His great name.

Caledonian Church,
January, 1825.

THE MISSIONARY CHARTER;

OR,

MESSIAH'S INSTRUCTIONS TO THE FIRST MISSIONARIES, BEING THE GROUND-WORK OF THE FOLLOWING ADDRESSES.

MATT. X. 5-42.

THESE twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into *any* city of the Samaritans enter ye not: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give. Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses; nor scrip for *your* journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat. And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, enquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence. And when ye come into an house, salute it. And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it; but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you. And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city. Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. But beware of men; for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues: and ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak; for it shall be given you in that same hour what

ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you. And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against *their* parents, and cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all *men* for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved. But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come. The disciple is not above *his* master, nor the servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more *shall they call* them of his household? Fear them not therefore: for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known. What I tell you in darkness, *that* speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, *that* preach ye upon the house-tops. And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore; ye are of more value than many sparrows. Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven. Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes *shall be* they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it. He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me. He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward. And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold *water* only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.

MISSIONARIES AFTER THE APOSTOLICAL SCHOOL.

THE OCCASION AND METHOD OF THE ADDRESSES.

MEN, BRETHREN, AND FATHERS,—It hath never been my lot to be present on occasions like this, so as to gather for myself, and the labours of my ministry have hindered me from going about to learn of others, what is the use and wont, and common expectation connected with the annual discourses, which are preached before the guardians and friends of the missionary cause; so that I stand up, inexperienced and ignorant, to attempt a work from which able ministers have shrunk back abashed, and to which the ablest within the land have approached with fear and trembling. It is, therefore, no less necessary for the reassurance of my own mind, than it is expedient for the edification of this enlightened and spiritual convocation, (if, indeed, I may hope without presumption to edify such,) that I should meditate beforehand the nature of the office which I have undertaken; what is the measure of my responsibility to Christ the Head of the Church; and to the venerable society which hath intrusted me with this charge; and what is the nature of my commission to the multitude now assembled to hear what I shall speak.

The high and seated dignity which this society hath attained in the judgment of the Christian Church, and the weighty and well-earned reputation which it hath obtained, not in Christendom alone, but over the widest bounds of the habitable earth, relieve its advocate from the dangerous office of eulogy and panegyric, which he may safely leave to the "isles and

the inhabitants thereof, to the wilderness and the cities thereof, to the villages which Kedar doth inhabit, and to the tenants of the rock." Its labours also, and the labours of its servants, on every foreign shore, its blessed toil among the barbarous people with the fruits thereof, the sufferings and deaths of its true and trusty messengers, or their return in godly triumph, attended with the spoils of idolatry, and crowned with the olive crown of peace, their gifts of tongues, and their interpretations of tongues, all the pious rehearsal of its story, with the pleasing task of justifying, approving, and applauding its various proceedings, he may likewise decline to touch, as rightfully belonging to another place and to another meeting, expressly set apart for that more secular end. Holy assemblies, like this, which are opened and concluded with praise and prayer, and wherein a minister of the blessed gospel is called to discourse from the word of God, before the patrons, presidents, guardians, office-bearers, and friends of the missionary cause, ought to be taken up with higher and more sacred discourse than the praising of men, or the upholding of man's imperfect works. The preacher hath before him the spiritual counsellors of the heathen, the propagators of the faith of Christ; who, being conscious of their insufficiency for such a trust, and knowing how they are liable to decay, and fail under the difficulties of spiritual work, if not refreshed from the everlasting fountain of life and truth, judge it wise, (and most wise surely it is,) to select from the churches ordained ministers of Christ, who may discourse to them freely and largely upon the cause which they have set their hearts and strengthened their hands to carry forward. For such an end they place him in the chair of verity, and put into his hands the oracles of God, and without let or hindrance or instructions of any kind, they say, Brother, as thou hast freely received, to us freely bestow of the gift that is given unto thee.

Now, at any time, it is a high commission for a frail mortal to publish the gospel of Christ, and he should seek for his soul every pious help; but to counsel the counsellors, to judge the judges, and prophesy to one of the great witnesses of the Church, is an overwhelming duty, whose approach I have long

dreaded, as of a mountain-billow which threatened to overwhelm my scarce sea-worthy bark; and now that it is at hand I scarce can summon strength to face it, or know how to steer through it safely. God be my help! I have hardly proved the armour of this warfare, before I am called to give counsel to the leaders of the host, and the assembled camp. The burden is too great, and oppresseth my spirit, and I would flee, like the prophet Jonah, from declaring the message with which my spirit is oppressed, were there not a heavy woe denounced upon every prophet who shunneth to declare the whole counsel of God. To which call being obedient, the call of a higher authority than the leaders of the host and the assembled camp, even of Him under whose commission the work proceedeth, I take unto myself courage to declare that which I have long apprehended, which, in God's word, I have well considered, and whereof I have endeavoured to be well assured.

In casting about to discover in what way I might strengthen my spirit to this high occasion, and in what style it became me to address this very grave and reverend assembly, and in seeking counsel of the Lord; it pleased Him to recall to my mind three instances in the history of the Church, wherein His faithful servants have been called to bear testimony before assemblies clothed with still higher dignity and importance than this before which I now address myself to speak. The first, that gravest assembly which Christendom hath ever seen, wherein the apostles and elders, with the Holy Ghost, met in Jerusalem, to consider how far the Gentiles were to be bound by the ordinances of Moses. Applying myself humbly to learn, from the manner of this assembly, whereof we have a particular account in Acts xv., I perceived that Peter and James, apostles though they were, and inspired of the Holy Ghost, framed their discourse with a diligent reference to Scripture and to their own experience; that Paul and Barnabas for their argument gave a simple narrative of what God had wrought among the Gentiles by their hand; and that every speaker abstained from words of policy, address, and worldly wisdom; insomuch, that there is found in the whole proceedings of that assembly, neither obsequiousness, nor

eulogy, nor idle words of apology, nor general commendations of the work; but throughout, a devout spirit, deliberative wisdom, plain-spoken discourse, and a steady application to the matter in hand.

The second instance which came opportunely to my mind while deliberating of this exigency in which I am placed, was from the times of the Reformation of England, when the godly Edward, and the Protector, with the chief statesmen and office-bearers of the realm, were wont to hear the master spirits of the Protestant faith discourse before them. On which high occasions these men, who, next to the apostles, were the best missionaries that Christendom hath seen, valiant men and true, who sealed their testimony with their blood, thought it beside their holy office to eulogise the most gracious youth that ever filled a throne, since the days of good Joshua; and they held it beneath their office to smooth down the stern and rugged voice of truth to the ear of the princes and politicians who sat in state before them: but like prophets arisen from the dead, (and what are Christian preachers but the prophets of the New Dispensation,) they fulfilled their office by thundering into the ears of king and peers, of courtiers and men of war, the religious necessities of the realm, and the religious duties of the rulers of the realm; for, as you may still see by the writings of Ridley and Latimer, and Gilpin, there were in the discourses which they held, no panegyrics of the work of reformation yet imperfectly done, no idle commendations of the labourers in the work, but rebukes of hungry courtiers, and hollow-hearted friends of the cause, pictures of an ignorant and famished people, enumerations of the religious wants and abuses of the realm, plans of spiritual and charitable undertakings, with a restless urgency towards the high mark of a people's thorough reformation. And sermons such as these were fruitful things, as the noble foundation of Christ's Hospital doth testify, which was the offspring of one of these fearless pleadings for the sake of truth.

The last instance, by the authority of which I embolden myself to the undertaking of this discourse, is derived from a quarter to which I, at least, and I trust all judicious and

charitable Christians along with me, look with like satisfaction as to the other two,—the Church from whose members one of the least worthy hath been chosen this night to hold forth to you the word of truth. The national assembly of the Kirk of Scotland;—which is by far the most venerable relict of ecclesiastical dignity, a sort of house of commons to the Church of Christ, and which ere this time would have wrought out for the religious rights of man whatever the House of Commons hath for his civil rights, had not the strong and villain hand of power brought in patronage against the claim of rights and the solemnest faith of treaties,—that assembly (whose pious labour, now about to commence, may the Lord bless!) doth never sit down to deliberate upon the grave matters committed to its trust without first appointing one of the brethren to discourse before it from the word of God. Upon which occasion the preachers, of whom I have heard many, do never, even in these degenerate days of pulpit liberty, condescend to flattery of the learned, reverend, and noble personages before them, nor to empty eulogies of the Church; but, as beseemeth the minister of truth and the chair of verity, they maintain a grave and serious discourse upon the high matters for which the ecclesiastical estate of the nation is assembled, and give forth with authority the doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness, for which all Scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and for the promulgation of which this office of the ministry is maintained on the earth.

Which three instances—of the Apostolic age, of the Reformation of England, and of the General Assemblies of the Church of Scotland,—coming seasonably to my recollection, while I was in doubt and much dismay, concerning that which I had undertaken, I resolved to establish my feet upon them as upon a sacred tripod; and to crave of the Lord, as indeed I have done, to breathe upon me of the spirit of the great fathers in His Church, that I might be enabled to speak at this time in that bold and fearless style in which they, standing in my room, would have dared to speak. For I said unto myself, Though all the missionary societies of this land were assembled within these walls, they would not form so grave an assembly as that which met in Jerusalem in the primitive

times; neither hath the work on which they are entered yet grown to be so great a work as the Reformation of England, whereof the missionary work is but one of the children; and this assembly, however reverend, is not yet so venerable as the great deliberative assembly of our national Church, which for three centuries hath maintained the fear and discipline of God within a realm, and once or twice, nay thrice, saved the realm from the armed paw of violence and misrule. Therefore, I said further unto myself, I will not shrink back abashed from the full and fearless declaration of what seemeth to me right; I will not sink my office into that of a money-gatherer, or a tale-bearer, of an advocate of institutions, however good, or a worshipper of mortal men, however excellent; but I will be a teacher of the gospel, and a publisher of the praise of Christ, and will not shun to deliver the whole counsel of God, upon this all-important matter of the missionary work: and I will speak it with the more plainness, because the heads and leaders thereof are now before me, that haply the Lord may carry the principles, which I am about to deduce from His holy word, into the court and citadel of this great and glorious cause, to which our countrymen, ever forward and ever foremost in a good work, have set their shoulder, resolved to maintain it unto the death.

But when I took to myself this high commission of counselling the counsellors, and judging the judges of this great undertaking, I besought the Lord that He would cast out all thoughts and conclusions which had their origin in myself, all fears and apprehensions which came in from other quarters, and that He would make of my organs of thought, feeling, and speech, an instrument wherewith to declare the mind and will of His Holy Spirit of truth. And, that I might not be wanting in my duty of searching His revelation, I examined everywhere for a basis, and as it were a constitutional charter of missionary associations, and a rule for them to proceed by in all their transactions. And having found, as it seemed to me, for reasons which I shall shew hereafter, such an abiding constitution, four times repeated in the Gospels, and given at large in the tenth chapter of Matthew, which I have read as the ground of this discourse; I gave thanks, and said:—Now

my way is clear before me; I will be an expositor of these instructions of my Redeemer; here is the matter of my discourse; here are the everlasting instructions of the missionary; this let me endeavour to comprehend, and set forth unto the people. And being, as it seemed to me, directed of God, both in the matter and manner of this discourse, I gave thanks, and took courage, and being delivered from my fears, I now proceed upon my course rejoicing, and hope to steer safely through that mountain-billow, whose rough top came threatening to overwhelm my scarce sea-worthy bark.

Having entered with caution, I resolved next to proceed with order in handling this great question of the missionary work; and it seemed to me best to set forth my thoughts after the following method:—

First, To give an exposition of the missionary estate, as it is laid down in the fore-mentioned chapter of instructions given by Messiah to the first apostles of His kingdom.

Secondly, To examine if it was meant to be of continual authority in the Christian Church, as the constitution of Christian missions.

Thirdly, To examine how much of the success of the apostolic age depended upon their exact adherence to the spirit and letter of this constitution.

Fourthly, To shew, from the history of Christian missions subsequent to the primitive times, that they have been prosperous in proportion as they conformed to, and unsuccessful in proportion as they departed from, the spirit and letter of Messiah's constitution for the missionary estate.

Fifthly, To study it in practice, and consider what good fruits at home, whence the missionaries go, and abroad whither they proceed, would come from the exact fulfilment of it.

Sixthly, To explain the office of a missionary society in carrying it into effect.

Lastly, To shew the duty of private Christians to support all such institutions, as endeavour to conform themselves to the appointment of the Lord, and to keep on the great work of converting the nations.

So that our whole discourse will be an argument founded

upon our Lord's words, and concluding for the support of this cause for which we are assembled, and throughout instructing those who are engaged therein. Now, I ask you to hear me at length upon this, the most important question of the present times; and not to restrict me to the bounds which are observed in ordinary discourses, but, as they do in the courts of justice and the national assemblies, to give me a latitude commensurate with the weight and importance of the question, which, not of my own will, but by request of this great society, I come forward to advocate.

According to this plan, the first thing to be considered is the office of the missionary, as it is laid down in these words of Messiah, who himself was Heaven's high Missionary to the earth, and fulfilled to the letter every one of the instructions which He gave unto those who should travel in His footsteps.

I.

MESSIAH'S CONSTITUTION FOR THE MISSIONARY ESTATE.

WHEN kings send out ambassadors to represent their person and their interests in foreign courts, they choose out from amongst the people, men of high name and reputation, well skilled in the ways of the world and the policy of states; whom, having clothed with powers plenipotentiary, and appointed with officers and servants of every kind, they send forth, accredited with royal letters to all courts and kingdoms, whither they may come, furnished with grace and splendour to feast the common eye, and laden with rich gifts to take the cupidity or conciliate the favour of those with whom they have to do. Also, when a nation fitteth out a journey or voyage of discovery, they choose out men of fortitude, humanity, and skill, upon whom to bestow a valorous and steady crew, who will not be daunted by the dangers, nor baffled by the difficulties of the work; and having called in the whole science and art of the country, to fortify and accommodate the danger-hunting men, they launch them forth amidst the hearty cheers and benedictions of their country. And when a nation arrayeth its strength to battle for its ancient rights and dominions; or when a noble nation armeth in the cause of humanity to help an insulted sister in the day of her need, as we Britons have oft been called upon to do, the nation is shaken to her very centre with commotion, and every arm and sinew of the land straineth to the work. Fleets and armies, and munitions of war; the whole chivalry, the whole prowess, strength and policy, and oft the whole wealth of the land muster in the cause; and the chief captains for-

sake their wives and children, and peaceful homes; and the warlike harness is taken from the hall where it hung in peace; and the bold peasantry come trooping from their altars and their household hearths; and "the trumpet speaketh to the armed throng:" they gather into one, and descend unto the shores of the surrounding sea, whither every fleet ship and gallant sailor have made ready to bear them to the place where the rights of the nation, or the insulted rights of humanity cry upon their righteous arm for redress;—and their kinsmen follow them with their prayers, and their wives and children, their fathers, and the households of their fathers, with the assembled congregations of the people, commit them and their righteous cause to the safe conduct and keeping of the Lord of Hosts.

But, when the King of heaven sendeth forth these twelve ambassadors to the nations, fitteth out these discoverers of the people that sat in darkness and the shadow of death, and furnisheth forth this little army to subvert the thrones, dominions, principalities and powers of darkness which brooded over the degenerate earth, to bring forth the lost condition of humanity, and establish its crown of glory as at the first; he took men of no name nor reputation, endowed with no Greek, with no Roman fame, by science untaught, by philosophy unschooled, fishermen from the shores of an inland sea; the class of men, which of all classes is distinguished for no exploit in the story of the world; Galileans, a people despised of the Jews, who were themselves a despised people. As at first, when God wished to make a man in His own image, after His own likeness, He brought not the materials from heavenly regions, neither created a finer quintessence of matter for the high occasion, but took from the ground a handful of dust, thereon to impress His divine image, and thereinto to breathe the spirit of lives: so the Son of God, himself a servant, despised and rejected of men, when He chose vessels to bear His name before Gentiles and kings, and the children of Israel, preferred that they should be empty of human greatness, without any grace or comeliness in the sight of man, without any odour of a good name, or rich contents of learning or knowledge;—that

the treasure being in earthen vessels, the praise might be of God.

Such men having chosen, for subverting the ancient thrones of darkness, and recovering the world from the perdition of sin and the night of the grave, He sent them forth, destitute of all visible sustenance, and of all human help, and forbade them to be beholden unto any. "Take nothing for your journey; neither staves nor scrip, neither bread, neither money, neither have two coats a-piece: provide neither gold nor silver, nor brass, in your purses, nor scrip for your journey, neither have two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves, and salute no man by the way." No means of any sort did He permit for procuring the necessaries of life, or purchasing the helps of their journey; no store of provisions, nor even a scrip for containing what might be offered them by the pity or piety of the people: no raiment nor vesture, with the change of which to comfort their weary and way-worn limbs, besides what was sufficient for nature's modesty and her present necessity. Without staff, without shoes, they fared on their way two by two; their sandalled feet exposed to dust and sultry heat; their bodies to every blast of heaven; their natural wants to man's precarious charity. The most defenceless bird that flies athwart the heavens, the weakest, most persecuted beast that cowers beneath the covert, or scuds along the plain, are better provided with visible help than were these apostles of the Highest; for the birds of the air have nests to which to wing their flight at even-tide, and the beasts of the earth have holes wherein to screen themselves from pursuit; but the founders of the spiritual and everlasting kingdom had not where to lay their head.

Whom having thus divided from the resources which human weakness hath in the storehouse and armoury of nature, he next divided from the resources which she hath in the power and patronage and friendship of men. They are to compose no speeches for the ears of prince or governor, but to speak as the Spirit of Truth gave them utterance; they are not to go from house to house making friends against the evil day, but to abide where they first halted, so long as they are welcome; they are not even to salute a friend, acquaintance, or neigh-

bour by the way. And if, in spite of these preventions, it should come to pass that the people they conferred with, well disposed to them for their word's sake, should take pity upon their unprovided estate, and offer them money to help them on their way; lo, they have no purse for containing it! if they should offer them provision to be their viaticum from town to town; lo, they have no scrip wherein to bestow it! They cannot possess, they cannot accumulate, they are cut off and separate from all fixed and movable wealth which the world holdeth within its fair and ample bound. What will preserve life, they are to take upon the credit of their universal message, without feeling obligation, for the labourer is worthy of his meat, and they are wholly obliged to another cause. In no earthly shape can they benefit from their labours under the sun; to no account can they turn the children of men, from whose liberality they can profit no further than to live. Like Jonah, commissioned with the burden of Nineveh, they are to gird up their loins and make speed; they are to hie from house to house, and hasten from town to town, inquiring after the spirits of immortal men; to tell their tale, and hurry onward: as the heralds of the northern chiefs were wont to hasten from house to house, and from village to village, when rousing the mountain-clans to war.—And cause truly see I none, why they who hold the commission to make peace should not be as fleet as those who hold the commission to levy war; and the messenger of salvation fly with as hasty a wing as the messenger of death; why servants should not be found to do as much, and to do it as hastily, for the King of heaven, as for the lordly chieftain of a mountain-clan, or the throned monarch of a mighty land.

Thus disfurnished of resources from nature's storehouse, and hindered from ploughing with human help, do you ask if these first missionaries of the gospel had promises of welcome everywhere, and went forth on a flourishing and popular cause? if the way was prepared for them in every city? and a hospitable home made ready for them in every house? Hear what their Lord saith to them at parting: "Go your ways, behold I send you as sheep in the midst of wolves. Beware of men, for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will

scourge you in their synagogues, and ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, and the brother shall deliver up the brother, and the father the child, and the children shall rise up against the parents and cause them to be put to death, and ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake." Such was their heavy parting. No missionary that ever went to the heathen, fared forth on his way with so gloomy a foreboding, so cheerless a farewell. Let no one object, in the face of these predictions too truly fulfilled: "But these are not men like us, open to every want; they are inspired miracle-working men who had nature under their control." Their miracles, which saved many, protected not themselves; their inspirations, which blessed many, could not bless themselves from every harm and sorrow which patient nature can endure. They are to be placed at the bar of civil law, to be hunted out with religious persecution; against them the tender affections of life are to rise in arms, and the soft and downy scenes of home are to bristle like the iron front of war; the tender hands which are wont to pluck the thorns of sorrow from our feet, are to guide the weapons of their death; of all men they are to be hated for His name's sake: they are to be hunted like the partridge on the mountains, and every refuge upon the earth is to be hidden from their sight. Go, said He, my chosen ones, go like the defenceless lamb into the paw of the ravenous wolf: the world thirsteth for your blood, and is in arms against your undefended lives. Nevertheless, go. You are without weapons of defence, no bribes are in your hands, nor soft words upon your tongues; and you go in the teeth of hatred, derision, and rage. Nevertheless, my children, go.

They are launched into a stormy sea, a sea of storms and shipwreck is before them, and their frail bark is not fenced or fitted out for any storm, or furnished for any voyage. So the world would say, because so it seemeth in the eye of the world, which looketh but upon the visible and temporal forms of things. It is madness, they would say, moon-struck madness, to think that of such should come any speed; it is not in the nature of things they should exist a week in any region of the earth, and in barbarous regions not a single day: no policy of

insurance would do their risk at any premium: they are shipwrecked, cast-away creatures, doomed to death, and destined to effect no good, even if they should outlive their first outsetting. Men must have a livelihood before they can speak or act: they must have protection to cover them from the tyranny of power, and law to save them from the riots of the people: they must be well paid, if you would have them work well; for if a man have no comforts his life is miserable. What! such mendicants as these convert the world! say the well-conditioned classes; vagrant, vagabond fellows, they are fitter for the stocks or the common jail. Such illiterate clowns, such babblers as these, instruct mankind! say the learned classes; away with them to their nets and fishing-craft. And, say the political classes, it is dangerous to the state; they cover plots under their silly pretences, and must be dealt with by the strong hand of power. Methinks I hear, in every contemptible and arrogant speech which is vented against the modern missionaries by worldly and self-sufficient men, the echo, after two thousand years, of those speeches which were wont to be poured upon the twelve apostles and seventy disciples, when they began to emerge out of the foundation of society, into the neighbourhood and level of its higher ranks.

But the Wonderful Counsellor, in whom dwelt all the treasures of wisdom and of knowledge, and who knew what was in man, did not without good and sufficient cause divorce the human desires from those objects on which they naturally rest. He knew that if He gave the messengers of His kingdom, which is not of this world, and against which this world conspireth, to expect any ray of hope, any shadow of consolation, or scantling of support from the things of this world, it would be only to disappoint them in the end: for though He foresaw that fair weather would dawn, and much enjoyment be partaken in the progress and towards the latter end of the work, He saw, hanging over its first beginnings in every region of the earth, storms and tempests, and terrific commotions, out of which the eclipsed light of truth was to come forth, and the day of peace to be established; He knew that in every realm His truth was to make way against the edge of the

sword, and, like the phœnix, to procreate itself in the flame of fire, and that His servants were to be heard from the paw of the lion and from the horn of the unicorn: wherefore it booted not to amuse those who were to plant the plant, and those who were to propagate the plant, with the enjoyments which were to be partaken under its future shade; and He spoke plainly unto them, and said, If ye have not a heart for the extremes of human suffering, and a soul above the fear of man, ye need not undertake this work,—more perilous than war, more adventurous than a voyage to "regions of thick-ribbed ice," and more important to the earth than the most sacred legation which ever went forth in behalf of suffering and insulted humanity.

But, while He cut them off from the power and virtue of gold and silver, which, they say, will unlock barred gates, and scale frowning ramparts; while He denied them the scrip, and therewith hindered the accumulation or use of property in any form; while He forbade them change of raiment, that is, pleasure and accommodation of the person; and with their staff interdicted all ease of travel and recreation of the sense by the way; and in hindering salutations hindered the formalities of life and the ends of natural or social affection; all these the natural motives to enterprise, and the sweet rewards of success, while He cut asunder, because, as hath been said, He foresaw that whether *He* did so or not, the world would soon do it for them: He did not leave their minds in a void state, without motive or inducement, or hope of reward; but proceeded to fill each several chamber thereof with the spirit of a more enduring patience and a more adventurous daring; to give to faith what He took from sight; what He interdicted in the visible to supply from the invisible; what of temporal things He spoiled them of to repay with things spiritual and eternal.

And instead of a home He gave them this declaration, which raised them first to a footing with Himself, and then to a footing with God: "He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me. He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in

the name of a righteous man, shall receive a righteous man's reward." Instead of food, He gave them this promise, "Whoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you he shall in no wise lose his reward." Instead of protection and a safe-conduct on the way, He gave them this stout-hearted admonition, "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to kill both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not; therefore ; ye are of more value than many sparrows." And when delivered up to councils, and brought before governors and kings, instead of human help and countenance, and skill of pleading and persuasive words, he gave them this sentence: "When they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak, for it shall be given you in that hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." And when their fathers and mothers should betray them, and their sons and daughters should spit upon them, which the first confessors sadly proved, He gave them this consolation to their heavy hearts, "He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me, and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me." For their sustenance under false accusation, He gave them this comfort, "The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household." For the comfort of their hearts under blackening calumnies, when their sun of life was setting under thick and dark clouds of falsehood, and their name was like to be overshadowed for ever, He gave them this assurance, "There is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid that shall not be known. What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye on the house-tops." And for their use, when they were enveloped in the flames, or

extended upon the honourable cross, He gave them this heart-establishing word, "He that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." And to keep up a constant cheerfulness in their hearts under every hardship and mistreatment, He gave them to know and to rejoice, that their names were written in heaven; removing their confidence from everything terrestrial, that it might rest at the right hand of God, where there is fulness of joy and pleasures for evermore.

Thus furnished He his missionaries, building them up in faith, and establishing them with infallible promise, weaning them from the bosom of the earth, to place them in the bosom of their Father in heaven. He took them from the hands of human protection, to put them under the arm of the mighty God of Jacob. He emptied them of self-dependence and dependence upon human strength and prudence, to fill them with the spirit of wisdom and truth. He bestowed upon them the elements of heaven's heroism when He took from them the elements of earth's heroism; and He conveyed their treasures away from hence, where moths corrupt and thieves break through to steal, depositing them safely in the heavens; where also He prepared for them a place in his Father's house of many mansions, and wrote their honoured names in the book of life.

It was a spiritual work they had to do, therefore He disembodied (if I may so speak) and spiritualised the men who were to do it. It was faith they had to plant, therefore He made His missionaries men of faith, that they might plant faith, and faith alone; they had to deliver the nations from the idolatry of the gold and the silver, therefore He took care His messengers should have none; they had to deliver them from the idolatry of wisdom, therefore He took care they should be foolish; they had to deliver the world from the idolatry of power and might, therefore He took care they should be weak; they had to deliver the world from the idolatry of fame and reputation, therefore He took care they should be despised; they had to deliver the world from the idolatry of things that are, therefore He took care they should be as

things that are not:—making them in all respects types and representatives of the ritual they were to establish, models of the doctrine which they went forth to teach.

Such were the men, and such the spiritual equipment of the men, who were sent forth by Messiah, the Missionary of heaven, into all the world, to teach all nations in His discipline, baptize them into His faith, and lay the foundations of that spiritual kingdom which is to cast down every other kingdom, and endure for ever. And the instructions which He gave them, how to proceed in the effecting of this great revolution, were after the same unearthly and spiritual strain; such as the wisdom of this world setteth utterly at naught, yet wherein are contained the everlasting principles, by which alone the spiritual sovereignty over the souls of men is to be established. And when we come, in the progress of this discourse, to argue upon these premises whereof we are now making the statement, we hope to manifest unto the spiritual man, and somewhat to discover unto the natural man, that this and this only is the strength in which the Cross is to conquer and subdue the glory and the strength of the nations.

These instructions were in the following words: "Into whatsoever city or town ye enter, inquire who in it is worthy: and there abide till ye go thence. And when ye come into an house, salute it. And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you." They were not, like poor mendicants, to go from door to door, and from town to town, craving a morsel of bread and a cup of water; but like the royal ambassadors of heaven to the place, they were to inquire who was most worthy to be honoured with their presence, and blessed with the good tidings which they bore from the Majesty of heaven. God thus established the everlasting connexion between natural worth and dispensations of grace, by bestowing His blessings upon the most deserving; and fulfilled the cardinal principle not only of divine but of human government, the rule of all natural and supernatural dispensations, (for at bottom these are one,) "that unto him who hath shall be given, and he shall have more abundantly, and from him who hath not

shall be taken that he hath." Inquire, said he, the most worthy. There was to be no stealthy progress, nor keeping in the shade, but open dealing with the most open-hearted and even-minded of the people. There was to be no preference of ranks shewn by these men of no rank, who counted kindred with Messiah, the Missionary of heaven, and were God's adopted children and honoured ambassadors to the earth. They were not, like the Jesuits, to lay their artful toils around the high and noble and princely of the nations; nor like the Mendicant Friars, to go about preaching a crusade of poverty or meanness; nor were they to take their distinction by the grade of intellect or of taste, which compose, even at the best, but a fractionary part of human nature, and may exist in strength surrounded with the most dwarfish and pestilent forms of the moral, social and spiritual man: but like messengers and missionaries from heaven, they were to take their distinction by the grade of worth, or practical goodness; to inquire, whom the judgment of their fellow-citizens had pronounced worthy, judicious, well-disposed men; those who, like Cornelius, were devout towards God, and full of alms towards the poor; or who, like Dorcas, employed their leisure and their labour to promote good and charitable works: to whose house coming with a conscience full of heavenly purposes, and lips overflowing with blessing, and hands rich in heaven-derived powers, they were to salute the worthy household with a salutation of peace.

"And if the Son of Peace be there, your peace will abide upon it." Before their steps proceeded an invisible minister called the Son of Peace, who settled in these worthy habitations, and made the souls of the inmates ready for these apostles of the kingdom of Peace. This Son of Peace is none other than the Prince of Peace, who sealed His instructions to His missionaries, and concluded His incarnate ministry with these words—"Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world:" the same who appeared to Cornelius in a dream, when He directed him to Peter, and who advertised Peter of the approach of the messengers, after He had prepared him for their coming: who directed Philip to the eunuch while he crossed the desert, and caught him away

when his work was done: who appeared to Paul as he journeyed to Damascus, and afterwards in the likeness of a Macedonian, invited his blessed steps to our quarter of the globe, saying, "Come over and help us." And, to this day, wherever the true and faithful missionary proceedeth in the faith of Christ, this same Son of Peace goeth before his footsteps, and standeth him instead of sealed letters, forerunner and guide, instead of safe-conduct and welcome, and everything else with which the prudence of men would furnish his perilous way; without dependence upon which Child of Peace, the missionary is a vagrant and a vagabond upon the earth; being dependent upon whom, he is the most gracious legate of heaven, never to return to heaven without accomplishing the high and holy intention for which he is commissioned of heaven to go forth unto the nations.

Being welcomed upon the strength of their salutation of peace, and through the predisposition of this Son of Peace, with whom God blesseth the hearts and the habitations of worthy men, the missionaries sat them down and were content with any fare, and with any accommodation. A little bread they needed to feed their natural hunger, a little water to cool their natural thirst, a little space to stretch their weary limbs; and in return, they had deep, rich, and various discourse upon the moral condition of mankind, copious and faithful revelations of the grace of God, glad tidings of great joy to the sons of men: and in earnest of that salvation, wherewith they were intrusted, they would heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, cast out devils, and raise the dead. Every good thing which can be wrought without the ministry of visible and temporal powers; every good thing which holdeth of the invisible, that is, every consolation, instruction, counsel, and revelation, which man's condition needeth, they held, by free gift of God for free bequest to man; and all that they needed or besought in return, was a morsel of bread to preserve their lives; a little oil to feed the lamp which was giving light to all that were in the house. And they made no haste to be gone, neither did they crave liberty to remain; they stayed while they were welcome, or till their work was done; and whosoever came to the house from the neighbourhood, or

village, or town, was free to sit and listen to the good tidings of the kingdom, without having even this pittance of bread and water to give in return. (But what is this, I say? I will not libel mankind so far as to suppose they would grudge so penurious a return for so rich a gift.) There they sat day by day in the house of the worthiest men, holding forth the gospel of peace unto the people, and by all spiritual persuasion seeking to persuade the people to accept the overtures of its salvation.

The men being so harmless, their destination so peaceful, and the spirit of their instructions so heavenly, it is difficult to imagine how it were possible they should meet with anything but welcome wherever they came. And it is one of the sorest libels upon the spirit of the world, that almost all of them came to an untimely and violent end. Well said the just and devout Simeon, who stayed on earth to welcome the great Son and Heir to the house of his Father, and wished to stay no longer, that the infant in his arms was set for a sign to be spoken against, that the secrets of many hearts might be revealed; and by Christ himself in these instructions, whereof we now present the substance, it is with still more clearness predicted that He came to send not peace upon the earth, but a sword.—How true, alas! was shewn the first year, yea, perhaps the first month of His life, by the cruelest sword that ever drunk innocent blood, for which Rachel wept in Rama with great lamentation. Therefore it was necessary to prepare these missionaries for the shadowy side of that experience whereof He had forewarned, whereto He had foredoomed them. They were spiritual vessels; bound for every port where immortal souls did tarry; and they had spiritual blessings to give in return for a welcome; but they had also spiritual terrors and cleaving curses, thunders of heaven against every city which gave them no harbour. The ambassadors of heaven held both the blessings and the curses of that court which they represented; otherwise they would have been only half accomplished for the work: and thus their instructions ran in regard to all who mistreated them and held their commission cheap.

"Whosoever shall not receive you nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust

of your feet, go your ways into the streets of the same, and say, Even the very dust of your city which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you; notwithstanding be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you. But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom than for that city."

The city, into any house of which the messengers that came forth from heaven with heaven's credentials were not received, having in it not even one worthy man to arrest the merciful hand of heaven, was well-nigh unto destruction; and the commission of heaven's servants was to read out its doom, and give it over to its hasty end. For they were not only messengers of the gospel of peace, but ministers of the wrath and justice of God, men clothed in sanctity, and in the august robes of righteousness, to offend whom was to offend the Lord which sent them. And therefore they held the terrors of justice no less than the overtures of mercy. But because this extreme commission of cursing the hard-hearted places is given unto them, we are not to understand that they were to proceed to extremes at once, and to deal only in blessings or curses. These are but the extremes on both sides, between which their spirits were to move according to the circumstances in which they found themselves. If the people argue, the missionaries argue again; and being assaulted with scoffs and cunning, they defend themselves with meekness and long-suffering, and from the wisdom of the world they protect themselves with the wisdom which is from above. For besides the harmlessness of the dove, they had given to them the wisdom of the serpent, with which to expose sophistry, to outwit cunning, to defeat artifice, and meet every emergency. None of the ordinary powers of the human mind was taken from them when they were deprived of the ordinary accommodations of the world,—whereof they were deprived only to disengage them from carefulness and trouble into the protection of their heavenly Father. They were delivered out of the conditions of the sense into the conditions of the mind, that the mind might act with the more alertness and force. The play of their spirit was not fettered in the way in which, in these times, they would fetter the ministers of the gospel.

They had the righteous indignation of the ancient prophet, added to the humility and graciousness of the Christian pastor. They were armed men, men armed with the wrath of God. And I cannot and do not doubt, that when they put a city to the ban of God's tribunal, there came upon it, if it repented not, judgments of a signal kind, according to the letter of our Lord's threatening quoted above; and I believe in my heart that even to this day, were messengers to go forth into all cities arrayed after the fashion of these instructions, they would act like the test of heaven amongst them, and according to their welcome or their rejection, it would be seen that blessings of peace and prosperity, or commotions, revolutions, sieges, wars, and discords would befal those places; not indeed miraculously, but in the natural course of things, yet not the less at the command and by the will of God. For in a city which shall scornfully reject or cruelly maltreat such innocent, harmless, and heaven-gifted men, the elements of evil are in strong agitation, and the explosion cannot long be stayed. It is come to a crisis with them, as with Herod, when he ordered the cruelest sword which was ever unsheathed to drink the blood of Rachel's children; or with the other Herod, when he imprisoned the brethren, and slew James with the sword. Such acts shew that men are lost to all hope of repentance, and cities to all hope of recovery, ripe for hell, and unfit any longer to live upon the earth.

Thus went forth the first messengers of the kingdom, commissioned to the most pure and benevolent and worthy part of the people, and they approached them upon the side whereon a good man liketh best to be approached, of kindness and humanity; for it is more blessed to give than to receive. Yet, to keep their character clear from all associations of mendicity or meanness, there is no scrip nor purse, nor obsequious demeanour allowed them, nothing that might take from the heavenly condition of the men; no demand for food or raiment; what is set before them they partake of; and the spiritual knowledge and power which they possess they as freely give in return. If none is worthy, they pass on: if they are persecuted, they escape away, as it were,

fishing the land, and taking in their spiritual net the worthiest and the best thereof; establishing the everlasting covenant between God and good men, between heaven and whatever is best upon the earth. They are kept in close dependence upon God's assistance, and cannot move a step but in the strength of faith. They are delivered out of the conditions of policy, out of the conditions of force, out of the conditions of gain, out of the conditions of selfishness and of ambition; for I defy any one maxim which appertaineth to these four spheres of human activity to help them one jot in fulfilling their instructions: and they are delivered into the spiritual conditions of the spiritual kingdom which they went about to propagate. In prayer and communion with the Spirit of God they sail along upon an unseen and unpiloted course. They are living models of what they teach; moving epistles of the Spirit of God; incarnations, each one in his measure, of the divine nature; instead of the Scriptures to those who have them not, and commendations of the Scriptures to those who have them. And if, as hath been said, the Bible is its own witness, these men who personified all its truth that can be personified, and with their lips spoke the rest, must be their own witness. And by being hindered from worldly interests and worldly attachments, they are hindered from worldly discourse. They address only the immortal part of the people; they confer upon no news but the good news of the kingdom; they touch no interests but the interests of eternity; speak of no country but heaven, in no authority but the name of God. Which four things, wisdom to address the worthiest people, entire dependence upon God, exemplification of the doctrine, and constant debate with the spirits of men, are surely four of the great principles in the propagation of the gospel. And it is incredible from how many altercations, from how many aberrations of purpose, and strivings of passion, and oppositions of interest, they are cut off. For if they are brought into debate, it must be for some spiritual sake, and spiritual truth must be elicited. If they are mistreated, it must be in the face of justice and innocency, which makes friends to the injured; and, doubtless, whatever happeneth, good or ill to them, good must come out of it to a cause thus implicated

with no earthly interests and devoted wholly to spiritual ends.

They who go forth to extend temporal power, and lay the foundations of earthly dominion, may and must go in the strength of chariots, and horsemen, and munitions of war; they who go forth to establish an influence and empire over royal courts, may go in the strength of all-subduing wealth, and diplomatic cunning; and they who go forth to discover the unknown regions and limits of the terraqueous globe, must go with the state of science, and in the strength of bold adventure. But they who went forth to bring all earthly powers under the Prince of Peace, and to subdue all arts and policies of man to the child-like simplicity of the wisdom which cometh from above, and to spread the spiritual kingdom of Christ over the bounds of the terraqueous globe, must divest themselves of those helps and instruments whereby the others prosper. They must not cast out Beelzebub by Beelzebub. They must not conquer a peace with arms in their hands, which, though a good enough combination of words for the earth, is a solecism in the speech of heaven. By being under mammon, they will never come to be under God: by conferring with Belial, they will never hold communion with Christ. Each kind hath its appropriate equipment; that which is appropriate to the powerful is power, to the politic is policy, to the scientific is science, to the spiritual is the Holy Spirit. The weapons of their warfare are not carnal, but spiritual; yet powerful to the pulling down of strongholds. The stone that Daniel saw cut out without hands, must swell without the help of human hands, and fill the earth. The kingdom which is to cast down every other kingdom, must be independent of those kingdoms which it casteth down; must establish itself in its own proper strength; and living in this heaven-derived strength, must live for ever.

Such a life of occupation round and round the land as was appointed to these men, is a disinterested, is a philosophical, is a sage, is a divine manner of life. Socrates, the wisest man of antiquity, of whom it may be said, that of all the heathen he was the man most after God's own heart, and who, from his pure soul struck out conceptions which were like morning

stars in the darkness, heralds of the dawn, not only saw the high dignity of such a life, but had the resolution to fulfil in Athens, in the heart of polished Athens, this very way of life which Christ appointed to His missionary servants. And he was so blessed in his deed, that, though he lost his natural life (least valuable of spiritual possessions!) he founded a school of master minds, which wielded the longest-lived empire, and hold to this day the highest place, among the uninspired sons of men. Socrates *foresaw* what the Spirit of wisdom *appointed*. For verily, the twelve apostles and seventy missionaries were each a Socrates in his kind; and greater than a Socrates: for Socrates went about in quest of wisdom, and complained that he could not find it, because it is not of the earth; but they had found it, being supplied with it from heaven. Nay, further, I will make bold to say, that if our wisdom were Christian or even Socratic, it would prefer no other way of life. It is our folly, our earthliness which binds us to the fardels of this world. The spirit of man spurneth them by its proper nature, and effecteth emancipation from their bondage, in proportion as it is conformed to that Spirit of Truth which possessed these twelve most honoured of the sons of men.

Now, bad as the world is, wild as is its ambition, heartless as is its vanity, proud as its riches are, and mad as they are all, ambition, vanity and riches, I cannot but please myself with the imagination that there is no clime so barbarous, or, (which I believe the more dangerous extreme,) there is no region so polished, as not to possess a gleaning of worthy spirits to welcome these travellers between heaven and earth. For there is no visible thing about them to create hatred; the men come in the name of peace: there is no visible thing to excite jealousy; the men are possessed of nothing, and coveting nothing: there is no visible thing to excite envy, for the men call nothing but their life their own, and even of that they are not careful; and they meddle with no earthly concern, and have no earthly end, and walk in innocency, and live in simplicity, and cleave to no sect or party of men, and know no country, and intend no interests; and their tidings are all from heaven, and their discourse all of immortality, and their debate ever holden with the immortal soul, and the end

of their ministration is the salvation of mankind; and it is virtue which they commend, and peace which they promote, and charity toward all which they enforce; and a blessing goeth with them, and health cometh to the house where they abide and the Son of Peace resteth there, and salvation entereth in as into the house of Zaccheus, that day they arrive. I cannot help thinking that the men were well endowed for their work, and that their work was worthy of the endowment, and that they would find in the worst of climes (as verily they did, for these same twelve planted the gospel far and near, from India to the British Isles) a class of men, and that the highest, to give them welcome. The ambitious, I see, would spurn them, and they would be content to be spurned; the cruel, I see, would maltreat them, and they would be content to be maltreated; the hollow-hearted wits and satirists would make merry with them, and they would be content to be made merry withal; and the busy bustling crowd would pass them unheeded, and they would be content all unheeded to be passed. "What do these babblers say?" "They seem to be setters forth of strange gods." "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." "They set up another king, one Jesus." "Away with them, they are not worthy to live." I hear these sentences echoing round their path; and I see them following it fearlessly onward to the death. But do I not see a Felix trembling, and a royal Agrippa knitting his half-convinced brows, and a judge of Areopagus blessing the heavenly tidings, and a Jason giving pledges for them, and a Gamaliel speaking before senates in their behalf, a Dorcas, a Lydia, and honourable women not a few, waiting upon the wants of the all-enduring men? and the thoughtful of the people are pondering the words which they speak, and the serious minded are applying their heart to the doctrine, and charity is leading them by the hand, and brotherly humanity is opening to them the gate, and affliction, comforted by their presence, is anointing them with tears of joy; and the genius of every high and heavenly faculty of the soul is sitting at their feet, well pleased to be schooled and taught by the messengers of heaven. I see they are but searching the land for the good, the noble, and the true,

leaving the wretched which love the earthly garbage to wallow in their sensualities. They are gathering each sweet and savoury plant, leaving the weeds standing for a devouring conflagration which is to come. The fire of heaven hath come down unto the earth, (for these twelve were baptized with fire;) but it loved not the earthly elements, and ran along seeking materials which had some savour of the worthy regions from whence it came, which having found, it took and enkindled, and left in a heavenly blaze each one in his place, to purify, enlighten, and enkindle the region round about.

II.

THE PERPETUITY OF THIS MISSIONARY CONSTITUTION PROVED.

1. *From the Document itself.*

SUCH was the character and the commission which Messiah gave to the twelve apostles, whom He sent forth to preach the glad tidings of His kingdom; and when He afterwards preferred other seventy to the same high office, He gave them their instructions in nearly the same terms. He never afterwards repealed these instructions; He never afterwards added to them. And when He enlarged their commission from the limits of Judea to the utmost bounds of the habitable earth, He gave them no new directions, no new promises, no new warnings or predictions, nothing further, save the assurance that He was with them to the end of the world. When these men, schooled according to this discipline, went forth afterwards in the same behalf, it is not to be imagined therefore that they would adopt other principles than those which they had already received from their Master, and practised with so much success. And if they would not, then it is not to be imagined that we ought, unless some specialty in our case can be shewn of importance enough to annul these commandments of Christ, and make the example of the apostles of none effect. But as it is of great importance that this point be established beyond all doubt, we have given it a separate place in this argument, and shall now proceed as was proposed:—

To shew that these instructions are of continual obligation, present the everlasting type of the missionary character, and are not by any human authority to be altered or abridged.—To establish this most important conclusion, let us first apply ourselves to the document itself, that we may ascertain from

its style and matter, whether it is meant to be local and temporary, or universal and everlasting. Now we are bold to say, that from the beginning to the ending of it, there is not a single sentence (save two afterwards to be considered) upon which the whole Church of Christ hath not passed a judgment, that it was pronounced for the constant use and edification of all who put themselves in jeopardy for the sake of the spiritual kingdom. Every promise in it hath become a standing order of the Church; its predictions have been fulfilled in every realm where the gospel of Christ hath been preached; and the first preachers of the gospel in every realm have established their hearts with the consolation which it containeth. The direction "to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves," hath always been the policy of Christ's confessors. The assurance "that the Lord would put into their mouth what they should say," hath always been the fountain of their eloquence. The privilege, when "persecuted in one city to flee into another," hath always been the measure of their self-preservation. The declaration "that the disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord," hath been their support under every infamous accusation. The knowledge "that the sparrows are objects of God's care, and that He numbereth the very hairs upon the heads of His servants," hath sustained them in the utmost jeopardy and straits. The promise of Christ, "to confess before His Father those who confessed Him before men, to save the everlasting life of those who laid down their temporal life for His sake, to be instead of father and mother to those who preferred His cause to filial duty," and every other sentence, of whatever kind, whether breathing sorrow or joy, foreboding ill or promising good, hath become, as it were, an armorial bearing to the soldiers of the militant Church, household words in the city of our Zion, with which she traineth up her sons and her daughters to be valorous for the Lord. Can a document, then, I ask, to which the Church in all ages and in all countries, hath attached an everlasting importance, and which contains within it the watch-words of every battle that hath been struck in this spiritual warfare, the last breathings of every valiant man who hath sacrificed his all for its sake, can such a document be allowed to perish? Shall any base-

born generation be allowed to hide it from the eye of the Church? Accursed be the generation that would harbour the thought. Shall any man or body of men, to answer their ends, veil it up or venture to annul it? Let him be anathema maranatha.

And it is nothing to the prejudice of this reasoning, that the document containeth two clauses which are local and temporary, and which can by no means be applied to anything beyond that journey among the towns and villages of Jewry, upon which they were sent, and from which, we are told, they soon returned with gladness. "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." "Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel until the Son of man be come." For it was necessary to define the extent of their first peregrination, otherwise they would not have known whither to direct their steps, or when to return to attend upon their Lord, for whose witness they were chosen; and there is no more of a local and temporary nature than just to guide them in this essential point. They are directed to limit themselves to the lost sheep of Judah, because, before they had gone this round, the Son of man would come; that is, would openly announce Himself to the nation. Now, because He marked their route, and gave them an idea of the duration of their journey, will any man infer that His instructions and counsels were intended only for that journey, and were to be cast away when it was over?—that man would make his Saviour's words of less value than the words of the most ignorant parent, who giveth parental counsel to his child, which the child holds sacred till death, never dreaming that it is cancelled at the expiration of his first absence, and if not repeated, is to be cast at his feet.

But the document containeth within itself the direct refutation of these detractions from its dignity, and restrictions of its duration. For, except in those two clauses by which it was necessary to define the extent of this first peregrination, there is hardly another clause which is not rendered insignificant and even absurd by being applied to that solitary journey. It is said, "Beware of men, for they will deliver

you up to councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues." Now, we have not the slightest hint that any of the twelve or seventy suffered indictments before civil councils, or scourgings at the hands of religious rulers during this journey, from which they returned with joy, confessing that they had lacked nothing. And, indeed, I know not what councils there were in the towns of Judea (for they went not to Jerusalem) before which they could be brought. Again, it is said, "Ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake;" and it is further said, "For a testimony against them and the Gentiles." Now, what kings, governors, or Gentiles, could they be brought before, or testify against, in a journey, within whose bounds there was neither king nor governor, and during which they were not "to go in the way of a Gentile?" And we have warnings of brother delivering up brother to death, and the father the child, and the children rising up against their parents and causing them to be put to death;—and yet all the twelve returned safe and sound. Again, it is said, "Ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake;" did that come to pass in this journey? Again, "He that endureth to the end shall be saved;" is it meant to the end of this short journey? But further to apply this *experimentum crucis* to the hypothesis that these instructions were intended for this journey only, would produce such a tissue of absurdities, as might destroy in my hearers that grave frame of mind with which discourses from this place ought always to be heard. Therefore, let what hath been said suffice for shewing the evidence, which the document yields to its own durability, and the express denial and flat contradiction which it gives to every daring temporiser; and let us proceed onward in the establishment of this our second head of discourse, whereof, if we succeed in convincing this assembly and the Christian Church, we shall have done no mean service to the missionary cause.

Against the perpetuity of these instructions, an objection may be taken from a passage in the 22d chapter of the Gospel by Luke, where they are alluded to in such a way as, to a superficial reader, might seem to repeal them, and to substitute others in their room. It is as follows:—"And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and

shoes, lacked ye anything? And they answered, Nothing. Then said he unto them, But now he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip; and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one." If this passage referreth to the same object as the other,—viz., the propagation of the kingdom of Christ, it doth make a remarkable alteration indeed; not only permitting the help of purse and provisions of life, but also of instruments of war; and while it gives a permission to the two former, makes the latter indispensable, requiring the missionary, who is without a sword, to sell his garment to buy one. This the crusaders fulfilled to the letter, who converted all their property into steel and armed men, and went forth in panoply to spread the gospel of peace. But as no one in these times is disposed to fit out such an evangelical armament, all confessing it to be against the spirit and the letter of the gospel, no use can be made of this passage to invalidate any part of the other. It cannot be in part taken and in part rejected. The mercenary spirit of these times will not lay hold of the purse and scrip, while they deny to the crusader the sword which is made peremptory, while the others are but licensed. So that we might dismiss the passage as totally inapplicable to the propagation of the kingdom, and leave the man who useth it against the argument of this discourse, to deliver himself from the dilemma into which he brings himself, of converting every Christian mission into a crusade. But, that we may carry along with us as much conviction as possible, we shall interrupt our course for a moment to explain the true intention of our Saviour in this remarkable passage, which we have seen strangely employed both by the enemies and the friends of His cause.

It was spoken to the eleven after the institution of the supper, immediately before they arose and retired to the garden of Gethsemane, where our Lord was straightway betrayed into the hands of His enemies; being the last words which He uttered to them before the hour and the power of darkness had the ascendency over Him. For they had no sooner reached the Mount of Olives, where the garden was, than His agonies and temptations came hastening in thick array upon His innocent head. And it is to be regarded

as a warning of the terrors which were closing in upon their Master and His cause, a permission to provide for their own safety, as best they could, and an intimation that the Son of Peace, which went with them on their former journey, standing them instead of purse and scrip and defensive arms, was now unable to defend Himself, being about to bow His head and expire upon an accursed tree. Therefore, said He, Until these days of darkness be overpast, and times of refreshing have come from the presence of the Lord, let every one of you betake himself to his natural shifts, and consider himself no longer as the child of an invisible providence. And accordingly, while His cause continued under this eclipse, they were delivered each one into his own protection; and when He rose from the dead His first instructions to them was, to depart from the scene of danger into a retired mountain of Galilee, (perhaps that same where they had been set apart,) and wait there till He should come and take them out of the hands of this temporary expediency. But before ascending from them for ever, He was at pains to assure them that He had triumphed over His enemies, and that all power was given to Him in heaven and in earth, and that He would send them His Holy Spirit, a better comforter and provider than the former Son of Peace; therefore, restoring them again to their former divine liberty, He said, Go forth into all nations, and lo, I am with you unto the end of the world.

That these words, which He spoke on the eve of this hour of darkness, were intended only for the use of that awful season, is not a conjecture, but the result of a deep consideration and analysis of the context, which, for your further satisfaction, I shall not hesitate to lay before you. The supper, which in every word and action signified His immediate death, was instituted and ended; but His disciples continued as steadfast as ever in their misapprehension and unbelief: which they manifested by beginning to dispute about precedency in that kingdom which they expected Him to establish. With a delicacy and wisdom, which breathed in all He said, He first corrected their worldly ideas of dignity, and explained that their true dignity in His kingdom should consist in judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Thence pursuing the dis-

course, that they might be humbled out of their present disposition or pride, which is Satan's snare, He warned them of the danger to which they stood exposed from the temptations of Satan. This part of His discourse He addressed to Simon, foreseeing his fall, and wishing to administer to him comfort under the deep contrition and sorrow that was to follow it—"Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you, (the twelve,) that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not, and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." This brought forth Peter's protestation, and our Lord's prediction of his frailty, which is, as it were, a digression in the discourse with the twelve; whom having warned of Satan's snares, assured of His own prayers for their sakes, and advertised of their need to be strengthened, He immediately adds the passage under consideration, as His counsel to them in the emergency which He had foretold. Fearing lest they might trust to that same protection which had been extended over them hitherto, and which had so wonderfully provided for their wants in their former journey, He turns their attention to their former experience, by the question, "When ye went forth without purse or scrip, lacked ye anything?" and they answered, "Nothing." Having thus fixed their minds upon their former estate, in order to make the impending change of their circumstances the more remarkable, He added, "But now he that hath a purse let him take it, and his scrip, and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one." That is, trust not now, under these perilous trials of Satan just coming on you, to be supported with any help supernatural. For my kingdom is to suffer violence, and the violent will take it by force. Therefore, look ye every man to himself, and to his resources; and be upon your guard from violence, which is more to be dreaded by you than the wants of nature and the inclemency of the skies; and though you should sell your garment to provide a defence for your lives, sell it, and therewith purchase that defence. "For," He immediately added, as the reason of the innovation, and He added it in His most solemn manner—"For, I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the trans-

gressors: for the things concerning me have an end." If anything were wanting to confirm what hath been said of this passage, it were to be found in this reason expressly assigned by the Saviour himself for the innovation which He made. I am to be treated as a transgressor and a malefactor, and the predictions concerning my death have now their accomplishment. Therefore, banish these high notions of power and dignity; for Satan is now about to sift you as wheat, and ye shall find none of my help which heretofore sustained you, but you shall find your own weakness, and be forced upon your natural defences: for the meanwhile, therefore, humble yourselves to the expectations of ordinary men, and have your refuge in the resources of persecuted men.

In all this there is nothing which hath or can have a wider application than to that hour of darkness, during which the glory of His kingdom was eclipsed. And, even of this season, that it was not to be literally interpreted, is manifest from the scene which immediately took place. The disciples mistaking His meaning, made answer to Him in these words, "Lord, here are two swords." And He answered them, "It is enough;" that is, it is enough that I have reduced your minds from these high and towering expectations of power, which would have cast you upon ruin, to the lowly sense of your weakness, and the prudent thought of your safety. But they, imagining that He really meant them to use these two swords with which they were provided, said, when the rout came upon Him in the garden, "Lord, shall we smite with the sword?" and Peter actually lifted up his sword, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his ear. To which action our Lord made this reply, "Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish by the sword." Which shews that not only did He not intend the sentence under consideration to be understood of the propagation, but not even of the defence of His cause; that so far from intending it to be applied literally to all times, He did not intend it to be literally applied even to that time of oppression, for the sake of which it was spoken. That it was to be understood, as we have explained it, for a strong and figurative way of reducing their minds from the ambitious

thoughts of power which their question indicated, down to a lowly sense of their true condition, its trials, and its dangers.

We have been the more particular concerning this passage of Scripture, because it is the only one which seems to bear against those primitive instructions of the missionary, for the perpetual obligation of which we hold the argument. This being rightly interpreted, (and no one but a crusader could think of interpreting it of the missionary cause,) every other part of Scripture proves that the apostles carried these instructions rigorously into effect. On the day of Pentecost, when they were furnished with all manner of gifts necessary for the work of converting the nations, there was nothing appertaining to purse or scrip, to power or influence, to name or reputation, bestowed on them. The things interdicted by the Saviour continued to be interdicted by the Spirit; for outwardly the men remained unaltered, after they had been inwardly endowed with the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, the gift of prophecy and miracles, the gifts of tongues and the interpretation of tongues. If money and provisions, if goods and possessions had been necessary, why were they not bestowed at this time, when heaven furnished out its ministers to all nations? But that needed not to be bestowed from heaven, which was soon forthcoming in all abundance. For in these times, as soon as the Spirit took hold of the converts, He made them indifferent to all outward distinctions and emoluments wherein they formerly prided themselves. And not only the missionaries, but even the converts of the missionaries, becoming careless of purse and scrip, and possessions, forgot the distinctions of thine and mine, and parted their all to such as had need. Now the apostles, when plenty of everything came flowing into their power, kept free from the worldly incumbrance, and continued breaking bread from house to house, and did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart. And when they went forth to the temple, so true kept they by Christ's first instructions, that they said unto a man who sought an alms, "Silver and gold have we none." And when the converts brought their all and poured it at their feet, not only would they not own any of it, but they would not, for the sake of holy charity and sacred justice, be diverted by

its distribution from the higher and better calling, of giving themselves wholly to the ministry of the word and to prayer. And they continued as they began; for throughout the whole book of the Acts there is not one word from which it can be gathered that, in journeying from town to town, and from region to region, they had any convenience of travel, abode in any houses of public entertainment, possessed any property which they could call their own, or in any way deviated from the spirit, or from the very letter, of our Lord's instructions. While they abode in a place, they continued, according to the commandment of the Lord, in the house of one man, whom, when writing letters from the place, they call their host. When Paul went up to Jerusalem, he communicated that gospel which he preached among the Gentiles to them only which were of reputation, using the privilege of inquiring after the most worthy. When the Jews of any town would no longer hear him, he condemned them, and turned unto the Gentiles; and when with one accord both Jews and Gentiles rose up against him, he shook off the dust of his feet against that city, and proceeded on his course. In short, I find not one of the instructions which they did not literally carry into effect. They had no wages; they depended upon no remittances; they lived all along and altogether upon the brethren.

And the gospel must surely have changed its nature, and abated its efficacy, when the converts shall become loth to support the man, who, under God, hath brought them from darkness to light, and from the service of Satan to serve the living God. And the converts must be miserable indeed, if they have not bread and water for the mouth which hath brought them glad tidings of great joy.' For in the primitive times it was counted an honour, not a burden, to give them the small accommodation which they needed. Cornelius *prayed* Peter to tarry with him certain days. Lydia, as the first-fruits of her conversion, besought Paul and Silas in these words, "If ye have judged me to be faithful, come into my house and abide there." At Corinth, while yet Paul held with the Jews, he abode with Aquila, and wrought at his craft; but when he turned unto the Gentiles, he entered into the house of Justus, one that worshipped God, and abode

there. And on parting from the elders of the Ephesian church, he said, "I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel; but these hands have ministered to my necessities, and those that are with me." Which two last instances shew us how they were wont at times to labour for their bread, that they might not be burdensome; but that this was the exception, and not the rule of their proceedings, is manifest from Paul's apology for it in his Epistle to the Corinthians. The rule was, to follow out the unworldly, unselfish, unambitious way of life which Christ had taught, to be wholly careless of the present world, wholly disengaged from its concerns, that they might be wholly occupied with the things of the world to come.

And when deviations do occur in the practice of the primitive times, from this exact ritual of the missionary laid down by our Lord, they are of that kind which confirm the spirit of the rule, being all deviations by excess, not by defect, of its peculiar characteristics. Paul, in these two instances of Ephesus and Corinth, saw it good to forego the right of living by his ministry, but in foregoing it he carefully excepted against its being considered as a precedent. "Have we not power to eat and to drink? Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, or as the brethren of the Lord and Cephas? or I only, and Barnabas, have not we power to forbear working?" In these questions of the indignant apostle, is revealed the custom of the first founders of the kingdom, to go from place to place, carrying with them no earthly means, and devoting themselves to no worldly calling, but depending upon the benevolence of the worthy, and having their feet shod with no preparation but the preparation of the gospel of peace. In his triumphant answers to the same questions, we have it asserted as a fundamental law of the propagation of the kingdom, and supported by the reasonableness of the thing, by the Mosaical laws, and last of all by the ordination of the Lord, "that they which preach the gospel should live by the gospel." Now, I ask, in what part of the gospel this is ordained by the Lord, if not in the passage, for whose everlasting obligation we plead, wherein it is said "For the labourer is worthy of his meat?" There is not another of

the Lord's sayings which maketh even allusion to the subject. Here, then, Paul quoteth a standing rule of the kingdom, upon the authority of this document, which the practice of many moderns would wipe out of the canon. Do you ask, Why, then, did Paul dare to set aside the ordinance of the Lord? Let him answer for himself. "If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather?" Nevertheless, we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ." He did it out of the *nobile officium*, the high prerogative of an inspired apostle, because he saw that the gospel of Christ, with which he was intrusted, would be advanced by his doing so; and how advanced, he hath told us in his next Epistle, when, speaking of the same thing, he thus expresseth his noble and magnanimous soul: "Have I committed an offence in abasing myself that ye might be exalted, because I have preached unto you the gospel of God freely? I robbed other churches, taking wages of them to do you service. And when I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man: for that which was lacking to me, the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied: and in all things I have kept myself from being burdensome to you, and so will I keep myself. As the truth of Christ is in me, no man shall stop me of this boasting in the regions of Achaia. Wherefore? because I love you not? God knoweth. But what I do, that will I do, that I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion; that wherein they glory they may be found even as we. For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ." These false apostles and deceitful workers had accused the pilgrim-traveller from town to town, and from region to region, as a needy vagabond, who thus earned dishonourable bread; whereby they sought to obstruct his success in the regions of Achaia. But the pilgrim-traveller had a soul full of resources, and a heart full of stoutness, to overthrow these railers against the honourable calling and providential life of a missionary. Coming into the region which had been poisoned against him, "he found a certain Jew, named Aquila, with his wife Priscilla, and came unto them, and because they were of the same craft, he abode with them

and wrought: for by their occupation they were tent-makers." Thus did he defeat the wicked stratagem of Satan's servants, who had transformed themselves into the apostles of Christ, by demonstrating that he sought no gain, nor cared for no livelihood, but became all things to all men that he might gain the more. And though I have said the apostle did this by virtue of his apostolic prerogative, the Church will suffer no damage whatever, if her missionaries, when they find the same false report circulating to the prejudice of the gospel, should adopt the same magnanimous course, of working with their hands, in order to put the calumny to death, and triumph over it with a holy indignation and joy; and not only contribute to their own necessities, but even to the necessities of others who have need. But I would advise them first to beware that they become not instrumental in spreading the very notion, that they are hirelings and gainers, by taking fixed and stated salaries, like any other craftsmen, which is the sure and certain way to make themselves not only be reputed but justly regarded as hireling craftsmen. So that this example of Paul's deviation doth, as it were, rivet upon both sides, the well-driven and well-directed bolt of the Lord: inasmuch as he honoureth the fundamental principle, that the gospel should seek and have no worldly emolument, nor depend upon any expedient of earthly dignity; while, in order to make the principle triumphant in an extreme case which occurred in his travels, he reacheth into the region of self-denial and destitution further than the Lord required, in order to get the weapons with which to meet the new and unprecedented obstacle that had been opposed to his course. And while he rivets the well-directed bolt of the Lord, he reproves that poor and pithless weapon with which the prudent spirit of these times aimeth its puny blow at the heathen world. For, truly, we moderns have taken the very means to create that stumblingblock which Paul found in his way at Corinth, by so constituting the missionary office, as that the men of this world might have in their mouth the very words of which Paul reproved the Corinthians, and to disprove which he needed to adopt this voluntary act of self-humiliation. To cure this, our shallow prudence, if we would use the lesson

given by this leader of the missionary army, we would do well, for as many years as we have fed and hired men, to require that they should go, as Paul did, into the other extreme of not even eating and drinking at any one's expense, but that they should support themselves by the labour of their hands, and glory thereby over the false prejudice with which the cause, by our mismanagement, hath come to be circumvented. This is the proper use of the apostle's deviation.

Now, further, lest a sentence which occurs in the above quotations should be turned aside to justify the modern method of furnishing out the missionary, which the occurrence at Corinth doth so utterly discountenance; it is fortunate that, from the Epistle to the Philippians, we can explain what those wages were which Paul took, and what his robbery of the churches, and what the supply of the Macedonian brethren, by the help of which he carried out his hardy scheme of confuting the false report by which the enemy had sought to impede his missionary progress. It is found written in the conclusion of his Epistle to the Philippians, (and how happy I am to make such quotations, God knoweth! for they bear my spirit up in the hopelessness of this controversy,) "But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity. Not that I speak in respect of want; for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound; and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. Notwithstanding ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my affliction. Now, ye Philippians, know also that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity. Not because I desire a gift; but I desire fruit that may abound to your account. But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which

were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God. But my God shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory, by Christ Jesus." This is the apostle's receipt in full for his wages; this is his voluntary confession of his robbery; this is the help with which he was helped at Corinth of these good Philippians. And as the former quotations are a proof of his most nice and chary delicacy lest the gospel of Christ should be breathed on with any aspersion, and of his magnanimity to bear every extreme of hardship, rather than the missionary calling should be calumniated; let this stand for the proof of his most generous spirit to partake and receive brotherly help. And let it divide and distinguish that chariness and magnanimity from the natural pride and independence of the human heart; from which the former spirit is as distinct and distinguishable, as the spirit of Christ, who gave all heaven's glory up and took mendicant crumbs of men, is distinct and distinguishable from Satan's spirit, who, though the brightest of the sons of the morning, could not brook the rich endowment, because he had to give for it an act of reverence to the Most High God. And let it shew, moreover, into what straits Paul passed, and with what difficulties he was beset around, in following out his missionary peregrinations, and how he had no dependence upon foreign churches; (for no one communicated with him save this of Philippi, whose gift he knew not of, and expected not, till Epaphroditus brought it in his hand.) And, finally, let it shew how the Lord, the Son of Peace, forsook not in his wandering, His hungered, His own laborious workman, whose niggard craft, oft interrupted, yielding him but a bare support, He brought him supplies from afar, and made them to follow him to Thessalonica, to Corinth, to Rome, everywhere through the heathen desert, as the waters of Meribah and the quails of the morning and the evening, followed the sandy parched footing of the camp of Israel.

After perusing which examples, will any one say that Paul conformed not to the ritual of the missionary school, because he took foreign supplies when they were offered, and

wrought with his hands when it served his turn? Thou art right, he conformed not; that is, he did more than conform; he was an apostle, and more than an apostle, for he magnified the apostleship. Go thou and do likewise. Be more than a missionary, magnify the missionary office, and in such a way shew thy nonconformity to the Lord's commission and passport. But first, be careful that thou art a missionary, and that the office in thy hand is not minished of its due size nor shorn of its proper beams.

I have heard quoted, as another deviation from the letter of the missionary charter, what is obscurely hinted at in the Epistle of John, addressed to Gaius, in these words, "Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren and to strangers; which have borne witness of thy charity before the Church: whom if thou bring forward on their journey after a godly sort, thou shalt do well; because that for his name's sake they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles. We, therefore, ought to receive such, that we may be fellow-helpers of the truth." This, like the former, proveth more for the spirit of the missionary charter, than if it had been in most exact conformity with its letter; shewing, first, that the travellers and ambassadors of the kingdom, in these times, were wont to be brought on their way from place to place by the charity of brethren, even though strangers, and did not hesitate to be beholden to their charity; secondly, that they went forth to the Gentiles without any means of conveying themselves thither, but needed assistance to reach the scene of their labours; and having reached the harvest-field, they put in their sickle and reaped without any hire, taking nothing for their reward, but passed on, dependent as before upon the bounty of the brethren. So much the passage proves, that these Christian expeditions were undertaken without any dependence upon ways and means, and were executed without any fee or reward; but it does by no means prove that while they were with the Gentiles they refused to be beholden to them for their subsistence. They took nothing from the Gentiles, and needed to be helped on their way, that is, they departed as poor as they came; but how they fared amongst them is not stated, because it was not neces-

sary for the apostle to state more than their present condition, as his argument for the brethren to help them. The passage, therefore, is nothing more than a certificate of the poverty and disinterestedness of these missionaries, given under the hand of an apostle to a brother, who, on other occasions, had been helpful to the brethren. How much it supports the spirit of the apostolical school of missionaries any one can see; how it beareth upon the present school, it is not yet the time to discourse of at large.

And other instances of this kind occur in the apostolical record: Paul, writing to Philemon from his bonds in Rome, desires him to provide him a lodging, trusting that through their prayers he would be given to them. He was then Paul the aged, and Philemon was his dearly beloved brother and fellow-labourer, from whom he might, without fear of misconstruction, ask such a favour; yet with what delicacy he touches upon pecuniary matters, any one who reads that model of delicate affection may well apprehend. At Rome, in like manner, he dwelt two years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him; because he was there as a prisoner upon parole, and accommodated his apostolic character to his forced conditions; but on his journey to Rome, the missionary constitution was fulfilled to the letter by the brethren at Puteoli, with whom he was desired to stay seven days; and also by the brethren at Rome, who met him at the Three Taverns and conducted him on his way. In like manner, Titus is instructed to bring Zenas the lawyer, and Apollos, on their journey diligently, that nothing be wanting unto them. In like manner, he writes to the Corinthians concerning Timotheus, that they would "conduct him forth in peace, that he may come unto me." And of such importance was this part of apostolical discipline held, that it is enjoined in general precepts like any other great head of Christian duty, "to distribute to the necessity of saints, and to be given to hospitality;" and it is set down as a mark of those widows who are to be taken into the number, "that they have lodged strangers;" and of a bishop it is required, as an indispensable quality, that he should be given to hospitality; and to all it is often enjoined, as to the Hebrews,

"that they be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares."

Sometimes, in casting my eye back over what I have written, and considering the new doctrine which I have dared to advance in opposition to the universal practice of the churches, I have felt a fear come over my mind, as if I had been guilty of presumption in daring to interpret God's word, upon this subject, for myself. But the more I have been led to study it, by the opposition which these ideas have received, the more I have been convinced of their truth. The passages which have been quoted against them, have, upon deliberate study, turned out to be in their favour; and the instances which have been given of deviation, have always proved to be deviations in excess, not in defect, of the standard of faith and self-denial. Moreover, in making those researches into the primitive appointments of Messiah, and practices of His apostolic servants, many new convictions have been brought to our mind concerning the office of the pastor, and the office of the preacher, which differ from the approved notions as widely as those which we have set forth of the missionary. So that, silently, we have come to the strong and steady persuasion that this is but a silver age of the Church, taken at its best, and that the golden age is yet to come; that we are not perfect any more than our fathers; that we should learn to believe in our imperfections, and welcome any one who will honestly declare them to us.

Sometimes, on the other hand, I have been tempted to indignation and wrath, that the institution and appointment of the great head of the Church should have been so widely departed from in these modern times, and being honestly and plainly stated, should find so little favour in the eyes of a generation which prideth itself in the evangelical character of its missionary undertakings. And that, instead of going about to seek men who were advanced in faith to the height of the undertaking, they have gone about to reduce the undertaking to the measure of an ordinary faith, and have attracted to the service many who were hardly fit for a pastoral care in the Church at home, much less for laying the foundation of Chris-

tian empire abroad. But most of all hath a holy indignation risen within my breast, when, to keep up the popular glory and renown of their work, which they should be ever rectifying by the word of God, they should be content rather to obliterate and annul that part of His holy word which is able to give them counsel. It is instructive of the self-exaltation of man to hear with what cool indifference they would consign to uselessness those immortal counsels which our Lord gave for the conduct of Christian missionaries, in order that they may have the field open for their own infallibility. They would break through all rules and laws of interpretation, and to a passage whose every word and sentence breathes immortality, they would give a temporary application, destroying its obligation, losing its comfort, and abolishing its promises to the evil-entreated messenger of peace;—all because it contains in its bosom two clauses which were necessary to make it useful and applicable to the time which then was, as well as to the times which were to come. Against this I have argued by an analysis of the passage, against it I have protested by an appeal to the apostolical times, in the hope of being able to prevail by argument and appeal; though, I confess, with slender hope in a time when names or periodical organs of opinion have obtained almost the whole authority in the Church.

But if there be left in the Church any reverence for the Holy Scripture, any love to the words of Christ, any superiority to the things of sight, and trust in the good promises of God, any memory of her past triumphs, or any hope of future victory, by these I do entreat the Church to hesitate how she discredits this portion of the Holy Scripture, because it applied to those times no less than to all other times. For upon the same principle she would annul every word of the Sermon on the Mount, which was suggested by Jewish errors, and was given for the abolition of Jewish errors; and every parable, and every rebuke, and every exhortation, and every instruction of the Lord, which all sprung out of the occasion presented to him, and applied to it with far more exemption of every other occasion than the passage before us; which, if it be distinguished by anything, is distinguished by this, from

most other of our Lord's discourses, that it will not apply cannot by any shewing be made to apply to that occasion, but bursts all limitations of time and place, and writes its own superscription to be, to the Church universal upon the earth. There are some passages in our Lord's instructions which apply only to a particular time and condition of things, such as that spoken at the Last Supper, of which we have given a commentary above, and which can never come to be applicable again, because the Son of man can never again be removed by the hour and power of darkness from the power of protecting His Church. But when any man would rob the Church of any of the Lord's sayings, which the first apostles were glad to catch from oblivion, rather than to convey to it, (of which their zeal we have seen an instance quoted from the missionary charter, 1 Cor. ix. 11, and may see another, Acts xx. 35, in Paul's discourse to the elders of the Ephesian Church,) then, that man should be indicted as guilty of high treason to our King, who liveth upon earth only in His words,—of sedition against His kingdom, whose laws are the words of our everlasting King.

Foolish men! vain, ignorant, and foolish men! they know not what they do, in their haste to annul the precious words of Christ; neither understand they the nature of the words of Christ which they would annul. The glorious words of Christ were not for one occasion, but for all occasions; not for one race of men, but for all races of men; not for one age, but for all ages of the world. And yet, in that which He said, there was always something local, temporary, and occasional, enough of the present time and present manners, for it to lay hold of the feelings of the present audience. But because the eternal truth which He spoke, had around it the drapery of the times, did it thereby become temporary? We, whose souls are educated in time, being of yesterday, do smack of time in all our thoughts and speeches, except wherein we are guided by revelations of eternity; but He, who was from eternity, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, partaketh not, and cannot partake, of the same infirmity. The truth which He spoke, is truth metaphysical, that is, truth independent of the conditions of time and place, applicable to all times and places,

and equally applicable when time shall be no more. The truth which He spoke addresseth not the temporary but the eternal in man; and by awakening the immortal in us, enableth us to shake off the temporal coil with which we are enslaved. Yet, as hath been said, the eternal truth which He spake, and from which all ages since have derived the knowledge of eternity and the sense of immortality, had a special application to the people to whom it was first addressed, and took hold of the forms of thought then current in the world, in order to deliver men from what was false, and manifest more clearly what was true, in those very things which they believed, and by which they were surrounded. But this taste of the times, and glance at the occasion, must never for a moment beguile us into the imagination that they reach no further, and were intended to reach no further, than to that occasion. Otherwise we must be content to lose all which He spoke from first to last. For example: the sermon which He preached on the mount, wherein He gathered up the fragments of all moral feeling and moral law, to issue them anew with divine wisdom, and write them in everlasting letters, not only searched into the joints and marrow of the Pharisaical sophistry and hypocrisy, but hath become to every country where it hath been published abroad, the basis of law and manners, and will continue the perfection of both while the world lasteth. Again, the comforting speeches He made to His followers before His crucifixion, not only moved them to earnest questions indicating their personal concern in what He said, but have been the sustenance of His disciples ever since, in all the trials of their lives, and in the hour of their departure; and will never cease to be as refreshing to the Church as the waters of Meribah. And His prayers, however aptly addressed to the occasion on which they were first uttered, are still the most frequent and the most soul-impressive of all our addresses to the throne of God. And those parables, whose images, like the Gorgon's head, froze His opponents to stony silence, are to this day the beautiful pictures of all social and religious duty; each one of them the porch and entrance to a magnificent temple of truth and blessedness. And those very parables which shadow forth the nature of His kingdom—the

parable of the mustard seed, of the leaven, of the twelve virgins, of the steward, of the royal feast, of the labourers in the vineyard, of the sower and the seed,—are not these as applicable now as then, and as frequently enforced and applied by the ministers of the gospel? And if in all other things He spoke for eternity, yet missed not the present occasion; if in all other things He spoke for all times and all occasions; who is he who will say, that when equipping and instructing the messengers and missionaries of His kingdom, upon whom all the rest depended, He hath said nothing perennial, but only spoken well for the occasion, and must not be understood as instructing us in the same terms in which He instructed them? The man that saith or fancieth so, hath need to learn again what be the first principles of the doctrine of Christ; and I warn him to beware how he taketh from or addeth to the words of the prophecy of this book, lest God shall add unto him all the plagues that are written in this book; how he break one of the least of these commandments, or teach others to do so, that he be not called least in the kingdom of heaven. If He, the King and Founder of the spiritual kingdom, in whom dwelt all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, did not understand and know the full provision and furniture for His own envoys and ambassadors, the strength in which they should fight, and the weapons with which they should overcome the powers of darkness, I marvel, indeed, who should understand and know them; and if His rules fail to be applicable to our case, I marvel who shall help out their inefficiency. The Church, say you; but what is the Church without its Head? and where is its counsel without its Counsellor? and where its authority without the Spirit of Christ? Therefore, let no man, nor body of men, no Christian, nor society of Christians, nor the whole visible Church, in their presumption, dare to say, these instructions of Christ to the messengers of the kingdom are now inapplicable, are Utopian, are extreme, are to be cautiously interpreted, and prudently carried into effect. For if these be cast aside, I, for one, see not upon what scriptural basis a missionary society resteth. Nor do I see by what principle a Christian missionary is to guide himself. But these

instructions remaining, I perceive the use of a missionary college, to see them carried into effect; and I see the calling of a missionary to be the highest upon earth, and the nearest unto God; I see that he is a messenger, not of time, but of eternity; that his soul is dressed, not in the confidence and trust of time, but of eternity; that he is a man of faith, and of faith alone, and therefore able to plant faith wherever he is permitted; and I perceive that the world is his diocese: and if the world is mad enough to despatch him away from its coast, then I find a haven of rest and glory provided for him by these his instructions. In short, without this document, I am all at sea upon the missionary question, and must handle it like a question of state policy, or of Church management: but preserving this, I have the Magna Charta of the missionary constitution, the description of the missionary character, the scale of his qualifications, the directory of his procedure, his safe-conduct from the court above, and his assurance of success upon earth, and of immortality in heaven.

III.

THE PERPETUITY OF THIS MISSIONARY CONSTITUTION PROVED.

II. *From the Analogy of the Christian Faith and Discipline.*

HAVING thus established beyond a question, from the document itself, that it is written for all ages; and having shewn that it was acted upon in the spirit, and beyond the letter, by the apostles and first missionaries of the Church, I see not what remains further to be said in order to prove that it ought still to be regarded as the constitution of the missionary estate, and the directory of the missionary course; but I feel, while I speak, a certain inward admonition, to weave the tissue of my argument as it were of double strength. For I seem to see the apparition of many enemies, and to have the foretaste of a fiery trial, for these thoughts which I have adventured forth. The warlike spirit of the crusaders, who unsheathed the sword which the blasphemous Father of Christendom had blessed, and unfurled the consecrated banner of the cross, therewith to spread the gospel of peace, and the artful spirit of the Jesuits, who brought all the stores of human wit and worldly wisdom to the same great undertaking, and the spirits of this moneyed and prudential age, who preach the crusade of gold as eagerly as Peter the Hermit preached the crusade of steel; all these seem to arise to overwhelm the poor wight who shall say that neither gold, nor steel, nor worldly wisdom, are essential to the equipment of a missionary; but so far from being the allies of Christ in the propagation of the spiritual kingdom, are the three chief powers against whose combined strength His servants have to make their way, and upon whose humbled pride they have to lay the foundations of His empire.

Therefore, I oft pause and look to my instructions, and see whether I be well sustained in the cause which I plead, and a still small voice whispereth to me that I am. The monitor within me saith unto my hesitating mind, Beholdest thou not that the deficiency of earthly means is balanced by the sufficiency of unearthly promises? and that though there be no purse wherewithal to purchase the means of life, there is an admonition from heaven to all men, to take the unprovided missionary to their home, and give him bread and water? and though there be no steel with which to cleave obstacles in twain, there is the word of God, which is a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces? and though there be no defence of Jesuitical wiles, there is the eye of Providence which counteth every hair upon their head, and holdeth their lives more dear than the beasts of the field and the fowls of heaven, for which He liberally provideth? Perceivest thou not that the former and the latter end of these instructions balance and sustain each other, and that if the former be taken away, the latter hath no counterpoise, and the whole proportion and wisdom of the passage is destroyed? Therefore, seeing it will not permit of mutilation, or of abrogation, or of temporising, what can I do but redeem my pledge of upholding the truth of my Master, with that liberty of prophesying which this grave and revered assembly, taking example from those three still more venerable assemblies, mentioned at the beginning, will not hinder in him whom they have set up to prophesy to them out of the word of the Lord.

It is not for the words, purse, scrip, raiment, staff, and friendship, that I contend. Whether a man shall have money, provisions, comforts, conveniences of travel, and friendly sustenances, or shall not have them, is not the question; Whether a man shall hide himself from all the secondary means of prosperity, or shall profit by them, is not the question. The question is concerning those fields of interest, those spheres of ambition, and refuges of trust, which the words, purse, scrip, raiment, staff, and friendship denote: Whether the missionary shall occupy any of them, or shall not: Whether he shall go forth independent of them, or dependent on them: Whether his character shall be moulded

and modelled after the fancy of the times, and the current maxims of the Christian world, or shall stand unalienable and unalterable, like the character of the pastor or the Christian. If a missionary, possessing all these things, can be a man of as entire faith and devotion as though he had them not, it is a small matter so far as he himself is concerned; yet not a small matter, as we shall see, so far as the success of the work is concerned: but it is not a small matter, whether the idea of the Christian Church concerning these offices shall be a constant or a changeable thing; whether the idea of the missionary concerning his office shall descend to him of God, or descend to him of men; and whether those that guide the work shall consider themselves, as infallible to give law to the missionary,—a commission, self-appointed, of *oyer* and *terminer* in this great cause, or men acting under authority, under responsibility, and by exactly prescribed rules. These are questions vitally concerning both the glory of God and the well-being of man; and I feel that I have been agitating a mighty matter, and am myself under terrible responsibility, if I advocate not to the utmost the perpetuity of these decrees.

Taking courage, therefore, I now venture a little higher into the dignity of this argument, and declare that not only do the unrepealed authority and the intrinsical character of these instructions bind them for ever upon the propagators of the kingdom, but that, from the nature of the gospel itself, he who propagates the gospel must be separate from worldly interests, and stand aloof from worldly occupations; and just in proportion as he getteth under the spirit of his high vocation, he will, of his own accord, though there were no binding precept upon the subject, cast himself into that outward condition here presented to the twelve great champions of Christendom. It is not a *conventional*, but an *appropriate*, not an *expedient*, but a *necessary* character for every one who possesseth a certain measure of God's Spirit: or, to speak in the language of the metaphysical schools, it is the outward and necessary form under which a certain large measure of spiritual influence will always manifest itself. But first, it may be necessary to explain the language which I use.

The twofold nature of man, body and spirit, maketh it necessary that everything by which he is to be moved should have an outward form. While yet it lives in spiritual essence alone, it is to him as if it lived not, and its life hath over his life no influence or control. Hence the great Father of Spirits hath given to all the attributes of His being an outward form and manifestation. The heavens declare His glory, and the earth sheweth forth His handiwork; and the sun which circleth round the earth, is the tabernacle of His effulgency. The written law, which is holy and just and good, is the form of His holiness; and the gospel of His Son is the form of His mercy and grace. Heaven is the outward form of His blessedness, and hell of His fearful wrath against the rebellious. And every doctrine in revelation is a form to the intellect of some spiritual attribute of the Invisible;—the doctrine of the atonement, of His justice; the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, of His help. And to the most noble and capital truths or doctrines, He giveth not only a form for the intellect, but for the very sense of man. His incarnate Son is the fleshly form of His glory, and the visible image of His person. The doctrine of our natural corruption and gracious purification by the blood of Christ, hath the sensible form of baptism. And the doctrine of our continued sustenance by His Word and Spirit, hath the sensible form of the supper. And the doctrine of the creation of the world, and the resurrection of Christ, which is the re-creation of the world, hath the sensible form of the weekly Sabbath. And the visible Church is the sensible form of the heavenly communion. And there is nothing in the being and purposes of God, which it might benefit man to know, that hath not a form of expressing itself to the soul of man through the intellect or through the sense.

Now, in like manner as God hath given to *His* spiritual being a constant form in revelation, so hath He appointed unto His servants to manifest *their* spiritual being under some constant form. To every man in his station He hath appointed his duties; to the servant and the master, the husband and the wife, the parent and the child, the ruler and the ruled; which duties are the outward form which His Holy

Spirit taketh in these persons and conditions. To a rich man, He hath given rules how to use his riches, and to a poor man, how to bear his poverty; to a wise man, how to use his wisdom, and to a fool, how he may be cured of his folly; to the strong, how to employ his strength, and to the sick, how to bear his affliction. And so to all the various gifts of nature, allotments of providence, and preferments of rank and power, hath God appointed a certain formulary for their right manifestation in the sight of men; nor alloweth, without rebuke and chastisement, that these conditions should be otherwise occupied than for the ends for which He hath bequeathed them diversely, that they might rightly occupy the diverse members of His great household, and bring out the common weal of the whole family. And while over every chamber of this world's variety He appointed a spiritual servant to preside, He did also appoint an order of men superior to these, who should travel over the many chambers of the house, and see that each servant was rightly occupying till the great householder should come; stewards who should neither occupy the treasury chambers, nor the attiring rooms, nor the bazaars of business, nor the museums of knowledge, nor the shops of art, nor the halls of judgment, nor the apartments of state and dignity, nor the saloons of grace and beauty, nor the awful places of throned sovereignty; but who should travel over all these from room to room, even from the dark and laborious foundations up to the stately elevations and gilded pinnacles of society, surveying the work and occupation of every inhabitant, and carefully keeping them to the right and diligent performance of their several parts, that they may be able to render an account of their work when the Lord shall come to call the work of every man into judgment. This watchful, careful office appertaineth to the minister of the gospel or the pastor of the souls of the people, in which, if he faithfully travel, his shall be a great reward. But if he stoop to engage himself with any of the diverse traffics, and, meanwhile, for want of careful oversight and spiritual instruction, the souls committed to him go astray to serve other masters than the Lord, their blood shall surely be upon his head.

Now, if the Lord our God hath taken to Himself a form in

the Scriptures for the instruction of man, and hath instructed each of us in His station to take a form for the edification of one another, and wherever His counsels are revered and obeyed, hath added the form of a minister, who, standing aloof from the several engagements and their temporal rewards, shall be His voice and messenger unto the people, satisfied with the singular dignity thereof; is it to be believed that He should have appointed no outward form to those chief and leading men, who were to carry abroad over the earth these celestial instructions, and teach the nations to rule their character and set forth their works after the will and pleasure of their heavenly Father; that giving to all others good and particular instructions, how they shall best and most happily fill their stations, He should leave the perilous apostles and missionaries of the whole institution no instructions as to the form which they should take, in order to move the nations and prevail on them to return to their rightful fealty to the Most High? This were to build a ship, with occupations for a numerous crew, and berths provided for many officers and men, but to make no provision how she should be launched into the deep: or, being launched into the deep, it were to fill her with plentiful supplies to some distressed colony, and man her with able hands, but make no provision of a skilful pilot and good instructions to carry her through the strong currents and stormy winds which set adverse to her course. The thing is not once to be imagined of Him who is All-wise and All-provident, as well as All-good and bountiful. *A priori*, before any appeal to the fact, it may be concluded that the missionary, doubtless, will have his form, as well as the people whom it is his calling to inform after the will of God. And his form will be after the fashion of the minister or pastor, somewhat more devout and adventurous, as the discoverer and subduer of a country needeth to be more adventurous than he who keepeth it under regiment. The one fearless, the other watchful; the one expedite and ready for all encounters, the other burdened with many charges; the missionary a spiritual warrior, the pastor a spiritual shepherd.

What this form of the missionary is, we have already

gathered from Messiah's own constitution of the missionary estate. But it will be a great confirmation of the doctrine if we can shew that, from the very nature of the Spirit's operation upon the heart of man, it must necessarily follow that the missionary should be such a self-denied and world-divested creature, and that he cannot come into a more full and sufficient condition without incommoding himself and hindering his work; that it is the necessary form of his office, from which every deviation must be lamented as a defect, and deliverance from it earnestly ensued as an attainment of stature, and a step towards success. Also, that it hath been, from the first of God's revelations to the last of them, the form which the messengers He chose either assumed at the outset, or came to in the end. Also, that the work hath not changed in these times, that we should ignorantly conceit a change in the workman or his tools to be expedient. Also, that this unworldly and extreme character of the missionary is in perfect keeping with the other parts of Christian discipline, of which no part can be levelled down to worldly prudence and homely practice without loss to the Church and deception of the world. And, therefore, that our true course in this and all other Christian institutions, is to work our character up from worldly levels into their pure elevations, assured that at every step we come into nearer neighbourhood to the Divine Spirit, and a larger sphere of blessing unto men. Such is the train of argument which this oration will take, in order to justify this form of the missionary, by shewing its alliance and affinity with the rest of the Christian revelation.

It is the nature of man, fallen from truth, and alienated from the life of godliness, diligently to seek how he may bestow upon the creature, and of all creatures upon himself, that worship and glory which is due to God alone. His talents, though they be created and matured by God; his knowledge, though all that he knows be of God's providence and handiwork; his possessions, though they consist in a portion of God's goods freely bestowed; his bodily strength, his form, his very name, that most airy and accidental of all things, it is man's nature to magnify into a god, and to worship as his chief good. And some will fall prostrate before science; and others before litera-

ture; and others before brute and senseless nature; and others before idols of wood and brass; and, in short, there is nothing inherent in the nature of man, or existent in the outward world, whereof the fallen soul hath not, at some time and place, made an idol, and with which, in all times and places, it hath not a tendency, less or more, to divide the reverence which is due to God alone. So that the greatest impediment to the progress of the gospel in the soul ariseth out of the things which are seen and temporal, the world and the things of the world, which come to naught. These occupy our senses, and thence steal into our affections, when the imagination formeth them into more lively and wily combinations, and the intellect busying itself with their relation, at every step of the investigation discovereth them to be so wisely adapted to the wants of man, so stimulative of a thousand pleasures of the sense, and so profitable to the ambition and enjoyment of the present world, that they gain and gain over our time, our interests, our desires, our fears, until at length there is left in the soul no room for the gospel to occupy. All is prepossessed and preoccupied, when the gospel comes into action, which hath therefore to begin its course by checking, cutting off, prohibiting, rebuking, and the like distasteful operations, known generally by the name of repentance. And after having brought these former propensities to a stand, it seeks to drive them all backward; to turn the tide of bitter waters upon their evil fountain, and to recover the fields of the soul which they had drowned and wasted from their rightful possessor. And in proportion as this work of emptying goeth on, the work of the Spirit proceedeth, the dew of God's blessing descendeth as upon the thirsty earth, and the fruits of the Spirit fill the former waste places; the evil invaders are cast out, the turbulent possessors are quieted, the lamb lieth down with the leopard, and the young lion and the fatling together, and the desert of our spiritual state rejoiceth and blossometh like the rose.

If so it be found, in the experience of all Christians, that the things of the Spirit prosper in proportion as the things of the flesh decay, and that confidence in the right arm of Jehovah increaseth as our confidence decreaseth in princes and

the sons of men, in the corn, the wine, and the oil; and that allegiance unto Christ doth undo and dissolve the allegiance of the human soul to Mammon, and Belial, and Satan, and even to the dearest and nearest friendships and relations of life, it is most manifest, that the disseminators of such a doctrine over the earth must be denuded of all the things in which men place their trust, and to which they render their homage, in order that they may be wholly under the influence of that Spirit, worship, and allegiance, under which they seek to reduce the rest of men. And these deprivations exacted by our Lord, of those who go forth as the propagators of His spiritual kingdom, are to be considered not only in the sense of tests or trials imposed by Him, or of mortifications imposed by themselves, or of examples offered to the people to whom they go, (though in all these respects they may and do serve good ends,) but as the necessary and indispensable condition to their being wholly under that very Spirit to which they would persuade the world to be subject, and as sure evidence that they continue under it so long as they love and submit to such a discipline. Christ wished none but spiritual men to take this office upon themselves; and of the spiritual men in the Church, He wished those who were strongest in faith, and those alone, to venture forth. Therefore, He set the mark to the most unearthly standard, and appointed that there should be no purse, that is, no pecuniary emolument; no scrip, that is, no possessions; no change of raiment, that is, no pleasures or accommodations of the body; no staff, that is, no ease or pleasure of travel; no salutations by the way, that is, no ends of natural or social affection. Which He ordained, not because He was a hard master, for He exacteth of no one to undertake the perilous yet glorious work; but because, if any one would undertake it, He would not permit him to be ignorant of the cost, but instructed him in the measure of faith which was indispensable to the work; saying to them, Unless the things of the Spirit have prospered thus and thus far with thee, unless the kingdom of heaven hath prevailed within thy soul, and subjected all these regions of natural gladness, thou art not prepared for the work; but if otherwise, then go thy ways, and, lo! I am with thee unto the end of the world.

If this argument, drawn of necessity from the nature of the Christian spirit, be well founded, then it will follow that amongst those who are full of the Spirit, he who hath a purse is as he who hath none, and he who hath a scrip as he who hath none, and he who hath a field as he who hath none, and he who hath a kingdom as he who hath none. And it confirmeth us the more in the soundness of the argument, that at the great outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, this condition of things was realised among the disciples, who had all things in common, and sold their possessions, and poured out their price at the apostles' feet. It will likewise follow, that a missionary, in proportion as he is careful of these things, shews himself deficient in the supply of that Spirit, whose chosen vessel he preferreth himself to be; and that no age of the Church which setteth store by these outward visible means is greatly enlightened of the Spirit, but hath need to seek for a more plentiful diffusion of His ghostly influences. It will follow, moreover, from this fruitful proposition, that, though a missionary in the first instance should go forth stocked like a trader, fitted out like a discoverer, accredited like a royal envoy, and three times armed with prudence like a hostile spy, when he cometh into close communication with the Spirit of God and the spirit of the people, in order to be the mediator between these natural enemies, he will, if his mind be open to light, be taught the utter helplessness of all these helps, the utter uselessness of all these useful things, to that work in which he hath embarked: that, though they may commend him to the proud and worldly part of the people, and gain for him a place in their regards as a man of some consequence and reputation, they are so far from bringing him into contact with their spiritual feelings, which alone he careth or ought to care for, that they set him more remote from thence, and induce a mistake with respect to his unearthly purpose, which it will require him much time and labour to correct. And if he be a true man, and a man of spiritual discernment, I think that a transmutation will speedily come upon the outward estate of this well-furnished missionary. He will by degrees divest himself of all those things which withdraw the people from the word of his mouth, or hinder

them from apprehending the simplicity and sincerity of his spiritual purpose. He will adopt their dresses, follow their manner of life, eat with them and drink with them, and seek access to them at all their unguarded moments, that he may be always at hand to drop his words seasonably into their ear, and manifest constantly before their eye the influence of his faith over all the conditions of man, instead of merely addressing them now and then with set speeches and abstract discourses against the very time, form, and place of which, their minds are already in arms. And he will not scruple to take favours at their hand, if that will bring him into closer confidence of their souls, which it doth far more frequently than otherwise; and if not, he will work to them for his meat, teach them the arts of his country, do anything that may bring him and keep him in close and frequent contact with their personal affections: and he will learn to be of no country, that he may remove political hindrances out of the way, and he will learn to carry no temptations about with him; his wealth, which maketh him to be envied, and perhaps endangereth his life, he will cast into the first brook which he crosseth, or diligently hide it from the people, (but how shall he hide it from his own heart!) his equipage of travel he will put aside; and, like Bernard Gilpin, the Reformer of the North, he will give his horse to the first poor family which hath need of one to earn their bread; and, like that most noble of parish priests, however full-handed the missionary may set out on his expedition, he will, if his mind be open to light, and his heart to love, return from his excursion, not only empty of all things, but beholden to the worthy men who had compassion upon him by the way. So that, according to the argument, the spirit which prevaileth within the missionary's breast, will never fail to bring him into that very condition of nakedness and dependence, I should rather say, fulness of faith and spiritual plenty, which the great Counsellor and Founder of the missionary cause, in the plenitude of His wisdom, ordained as the proper condition, not to end with, but to set out with, in this faithful and spiritual adventure.

It is not that we attach any importance to the outward costume of a missionary, which also may be assumed. Under

the coarse frock of a friar lay oft more pride and cunning than beneath a cardinal's hat; and the triple crown hath not covered more ambitious purposes than lay within the cowl of the Jesuit who exposed himself to every blast of heaven. The pride of human nature may make noble-minded men to dwell like Diogenes in a tub; the disappointments of the world may drive them like Timon to the woods; and racking remorse may send them unprovided pilgrims over untrodden deserts, or attach them to the coarse fare and bare walls of a hermit's cell; the forms of poverty and meanness are endless, which the spirit of man may assume for its own particular gratification, without any regard to the well-being of others, or the propagation of the kingdom of Christ; and therefore no form is to be taken as a sure test of the true spirit of a Christian missionary. Nevertheless, as hath been proved above, there is a form which, beyond others, is expressive of a heavenly mind and a disinterested mission,—that which Messiah chose for Himself when coming into the world, and which He laid upon all who would travail with Him for the redemption of the world. It is not indispensable to the true missionary spirit, but the true missionary spirit doth love it, and cannot without self-denial be brought to lay it aside; it is not unequivocal to those without, but it is least liable to be misinterpreted; it is not a capital crime against the laws of the spiritual kingdom to lay it aside for an occasion, as it is not a capital crime against our naval laws for a captain to lose his ship, but as in the latter case so in the former, he ought to be put upon his trial, and make appear before the statutes of our king, that it was for the best interests of the kingdom that it was set aside.

Such is the argument drawn from the necessary laws of spiritual influence; and such are the consequences of the argument: but what saith the fact? The fact saith this, that by men, so conditioned as these instructions set forth, God hath always wrought enlargement or salvation to His spiritual kingdom. Joseph, by whom He saved the promised seed, and got for them the land of Goshen, was first stripped of everything, father and mother, and brotherly love, made a bondsman, beleaguered with temptation, falsely accused and

imprisoned, friendless and helpless in the dungeons of a foreign land. And when, the people being lost to the knowledge of God and the nobility of their calling, the orphan shepherd Moses was chosen for the great work of setting them free, and receiving the law from the mouth of the Lord, he argued three times his unfitness for the work, first, from Pharaoh's strong and high condition; secondly, from the unbelief of the people; and, lastly, from his own meanness and want of eloquence. But the Lord gave him no appointments under heaven save his shepherd's rod. Elijah, who was called on at another similar pass, when the people had with one accord fallen away under idolatry and tyranny, had not a house or a morsel of meat or a friend within the bounds of Israel to give him shelter; yet the Lord by his hand slew all the priests of Baal, and overthrew their altars in the high places. And Elisha, on whom his mantle fell, and with it his perilous work, that same day he received his commission to go forth to the Lord's work, sacrificed his oxen, and made the fire for the sacrifice out of the wood of his agricultural implements, cutting asunder all connexion with the world, and destroying that which won his bread, devoting the instruments of his wealth in thanksgiving to the Lord, who had called him to the work of a higher husbandry, And David, from feeding the sheep, by neither chariot nor horsemen, won favour in the sight of Israel, and was advanced to the throne. And Esther, an orphan woman, saved the people of the Lord from utter ruin. And all the prophets were without reputation or worldly condition, otherwise they had been unfit for their perilous work: Amos, from among the herdsmen of Tekoah, Ezekiel, from the captives by the rivers of Chebar, Daniel and the three children from menial offices in the palace of an Eastern king. And whosoever else, under the former dispensation, was separated as a chosen vessel for containing the revelation, and doing the work of the Lord, was either ill-conditioned by birth, evil-starred of fortune, or stripped naked by the world, made a Nazarite of, separated by the Lord unto Himself, before he could be entered to the work of doing great and lasting service to the interests of righteousness. And John the Baptist, the forerunner of

Christ, who may be reckoned the great type of missionaries, if Christ be the great type of shepherds or pastors, (for the missionary prepareth the way for the pastor, as the Baptist did for Christ,) was made a Nazarite from his mother's womb; that is, he was separated from strong drink, which representeth all artificial stimulants of the spirit and luxuries of the body; and a razor was not permitted to come upon his head, which meaneth that he was separated from all outward show and ornament; and thus being hindered from regarding his own gratification and the world's eye, he was come into a condition for receiving the inspirations of the Spirit of God, which cannot enter into communion with sense and selfishness, those two great idols of men. And Christ himself, though He was in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God, made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man; and being found in fashion as a man, humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Thus making Himself both a model and a history of every one who is to extend that kingdom which He founded, and labour in the salvation which He purchased. And, finally, what the twelve and seventy were, and how they were fitted out for their work, we have spent the former head of this discourse in explaining. And what the people were who first received their message, and in their several neighbourhoods propagated the kingdom, Paul hath told in the Corinthians, "Brethren, ye see your calling, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty, and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are."

What more, then, is required to shew that there ever must be, and ever hath been, a necessity for disjunction from the works of the world in order to work the works of God; that the great heralds of Heaven must take a stand above the earth, in order to raise men above the earth; that they must undervalue those things which they teach men to undervalue? What are missionaries but the prophets' order enlarged from the confines of the land of Israel, to roam at large over the world? God's messengers to the nations, telling them their several burdens if they repent not, and shewing them salvation if they repent. Each a Jonah to the several quarters of the heathen world: not servants of this or that association of men, but heralds of Heaven, who dare not be under other orders than the orders of Christ. It is a presumption hardly short of Papal, to command them. They are not missionaries when they are commanded. They are creatures of the power that commandeth them. Up, up with the stature of this character: it is high as heaven: its head is above the clouds which hide the face of heaven from earth-born men: its ear heareth the word of God continually, and continually re-echoeth what it heareth to the nations. The missionary is the hollow of that trump which resoundeth the voice of God. Let us reverence him, he is above us all, he is above the world, he is an ethereal being, and careth not for the concerns of time. I wonder how any one can be so impious towards God, so cruel towards men, as to wish to obliterate one feature of his celestial character. Though none of those who at present respectably bear the honours of the name come near to it, still let it stand, that, being ever in their eye, they may approach it more and more near. Though none of this generation can bear the palm of it away, some of our children may. And though none of our children should reach it nearer than their fathers, some of our children's children may. Some favoured one may be raised up of God, who, like another Paul, may give it full and complete vitality. And when he shall arrive, rest assured that, like another Paul, he will convert half the nations. For well am I convinced that the gospel waiteth only for such spiritual men, in order to burst its present narrow bounds, and the

Spirit waiteth only for these necessary conditions to fill the inward soul of any man, and make him a chosen vessel, a royal stately ship to sail in all seas, and bear the treasure unto all lands. I feel, that in pleading for the perpetuity of the missionary form of manhood, I am pleading the cause, not only of the unconverted nations, but the cause of Divine power and truth, which is hindered from descending to tabernacle with mortals only by our low-thoughted cares and worldly occupations. Martha, who was burdened with many things, is the genius of the human race; Mary, who had chosen the one thing needful, is the genius of the missionary band, who, not out of the greatness of their grief, but the greatness of their love, have become careless of all those things, save that good part which shall not be taken from them.

Who is he that talks of change? The missionary ordinance can never change, for the missionary work doth never change. His work is still to overthrow the prince of this world, seated upon the beauty and pleasantness, upon the magnificence and glory of the visible creation, and to deliver the souls of men into the worship of the invisible God. Kingdoms may undergo every vicissitude, and be found under every form of civil polity; nations may exist in every degree of culture or barbarism; they may be noble, high minded and proud; sordid, base, and given over to gain and sensual indulgence; vainglorious, pompous, and fond of a thousand spectacles; they may be grovelling in superstition, sunk in ignorance, abandoned to sloth and effeminacy, or fierce, fiery, and uncontrollable; but never will a kingdom or nation be found possessed of the knowledge of the true God, devoted to the faith and pursuit of spiritual objects, or living in the practice of Christian precepts. The maxims, the spirit of the laws and policy, the motives and principles of private conduct, the whole tenor of their society, and influence of their religion, have to be counteracted and overthrown in these times, as entirely as in the days of the apostles. There is no relaxation of the oppositions, there is no mitigation of the difficulties of the work, which never changeth. And the gospel which the missionary hath to preach, the kingdom which he hath to propagate, is still the same spiritual kingdom which flesh and

blood cannot inherit, whose King hath no communion with Belial nor with Mammon, in whose sight iniquity cannot stand, and to whom the proud heart and the high look are an abomination. This gospel, which hath toleration for no natural form of humanity however excellent, and condemneth every living man, which beginneth in sorrow and repentance for the past, proceedeth by the faith and preference of things unseen, and is perfected in a thousand acts of self-denial and self-discipline, is not now more agreeable to the nations than it was when first revealed by our Lord and Saviour. And if the gospel, after two thousand years, is still as unaccommodating to the world, and the world is still by nature as averse from its faith and discipline, how should the manner of its propagation be altered in any respect from what was laid down and followed at the first? If the first missionaries were made spiritual personages, in order to exhibit practically to the people that preference and all-sufficiency of spiritual things which they preached; if they were men of faith alone, in order to exhibit that principle which they sought to magnify over sight and sense, why should they not be so likewise in these times, in which the heathen are still as devoted to things seen and temporal, as they were in the days of Paul? Even supposing the present missionaries had more divinity of nature than the apostles, and that they could possess purse, scrip, and all other accommodations without being thereby unspiritualised, how shall they hinder the evil interpretation of the heathen, who see them hired, paid, accommodated, befriended, and in all outward things better conditioned than themselves? They speak to us of faith; let them shew us their own. They speak to us of the providence of God; but they ventured not hither without every security. They tell us of Christ's disinterestedness to us; but what lessons give they us of the same? And so forth through every particular of their condition, by which Christ intended that they should evidence the doctrine which they taught. I cannot understand, therefore, in any way, how the condition of the missionary work should be changed, when the work itself remaineth the same; or how the instruction which Christ gave for the propagation of His kingdom should now be null and void,

when it is the same kingdom that is to be propagated, and the difficulties and impediments are still the same, over the head of which its propagation is to be effected.

I admire the steadiness with which the spiritual people of this day have stood out against the ignorant clamour, that the heathen must be civilised before they can be Christianised; I admire, also, the faith which they have shewn in the power of God, to save men by the preaching of the word, without any help of the arts of government or of civil life; and the simplicity with which they devote themselves to the circulation of the Scriptures, and the sending out of teachers and preachers; and they are never enough to be commended for standing aloof from the employment of force, and power, and civil policy; in all these respects, fulfilling the maxim of Christ, "My kingdom is not of this world." But there are a few things which still savour of the spirit of the world, and which must be put away by the diligent perusal and faithful execution of this the missionary charter; which, instead of arguing against or pulling down, they should regard as the everlasting conditions of the missionary work, within which men have only to come in order to be ready for the high office, and ripe for scattering the everlasting seed amongst the nations. There hath been much searching of the Scriptures for a platform of church government, and every passage which can be forced into that application, has been strained to the utmost, in order that a *jus divinum* might be made out for Episcopacy, Presbytery, and Independency in their turns. Sure I am that none, nor all of these put together, can make out such a divine right as the missionary work hath in these instructions of our Lord; and had there been human interests concerned in the establishment of it, as human interests there are none, unspiritual men would long ere this have used it for securing them; but being the death of secularity, the essence of spiritual mindedness, and the quintessence of self-denial, I perceive that it hath everything to contend with, scoffs, ridicule, and worldly wisdom, and cannot be generally acceptable in times when the secular and the spiritual have become strangely intermingled, and maxims current on the exchange have become current in holy places, when the offices of the Church have come to be

valued by their emoluments, and for their emoluments sought out, and as an emolument discoursed of amongst the people. It is not now the time to discourse of the pastoral office, (I shall hereafter,) but it were easy to shew from the epistles of the great Shepherd to the angels of the seven churches of Asia, that it is an office in its spirit, consenting with that view of the missionary office which we labour to establish, and widely dissenting from those views of it which are now current amongst both priests and people. But while those erroneous views prevail of the pastoral office, which is under our eye at home, and from which we derive our notion of the missionary, it will be in vain to think that the latter notion can be a correct one. Therefore, it is the more necessary, among the many sources of error to which we are exposed in making up our idea of the missionary, to adhere to the Divine platform contained in these verses, and be governed by the *jus divinum*, the Divine authority of that unrepealed constitution.

Therefore I say, let this type of the missionary stand, that he is a man without a purse, without a scrip, without a change of raiment, without a staff, without the care of making friends or keeping friends, without the hope or desire of worldly good, without the apprehension of worldly loss, without the care of life, without the fear of death; of no rank, of no country, of no condition; a man of one thought, the gospel of Christ; a man of one purpose, the glory of God; a fool, and content to be reckoned a fool, for Christ; a madman, and content to be reckoned a madman, for Christ. Let him be enthusiast, fanatic, babbler, or any other outlandish nondescript the world may choose to denominate him. But still let him be a nondescript, a man that cannot be classed under any of their categories, or defined by any of their convenient and conventional names. When they can call him pensioner, trader, householder, citizen; man of substance, man of the world, man of science, man of learning, or even man of common sense, it is all over with his missionary character. He may innocently have some of these forms of character, some of them he cannot innocently have; but they will be far subordinate, deep in the shade, covered and extinguished to the world's incurious gaze, by the strange incoherent and unaccountable character to

which he surrendereth himself mainly. The world knoweth the missionary not, because it knew Messiah not. The nature of his life is hid with Christ in God; he is not a man, but the spirit of a man; he is a spirit that hath divested itself of all earthiness, save the continent body, which it keepeth down and useth as its tabernacle, and its vehicle, and its mechanical tool for speech and for action.

The standard is a high one, and suiteth not an easy and prudential age, and we that are bred in peaceful places may stumble at it, and some of our self-sufficient spirits may scoff at it. But our fathers held it in reputation when they suffered the loss of all things, and counted them but as dung, that they might win Christ; and the missionaries who came to our fathers were accustomed to it. And what is a missionary who shrinketh at it? Can he stand the stake or the cross who cannot bear hunger, thirst, and nakedness? Was any man a martyr who could not be a hungered for Christ? What are purse, staff, scrip, raiment, and friendship, but the help and sustenance of life, taking their value from the love we have of life? And if we are prepared to scuttle the ship, are we not prepared to sink the timbers, and cordage, and tackle of the ship? This unearthly dimension of the missionary character is in such keeping with the rest of the Christian dispensation, as to commend itself to our mind on that very account. Had it not been perfect in this its beau-ideal, had it been accommodated to prudence and practice, a plausible, reasonable, fair-looking speculation like that which it seems hasting to become, I for one would have said, This is not like a character of Christ's delineation; it wanteth the touch of the Divine hand; it hath not the supernatural air. It is of the earth, earthly: it is not of the heavens, heavenly: it is born of flesh, it consorteth with Mammon and hath fellowship with Belial. I doubt whether it be an original or not; for here, in Christ's style, is a description of faith as the *substance* of things hoped for; and here is a cloud of witnesses, who by faith substantiated invisible things; and here is a description of the Christian life, as a walk by faith and not by sight; and here is a description of charity so perfect as to make the holiest man abhor himself; and here is a law which condemneth the

justest men; and here is a rule of chastity, and a rule for behaving to enemies, and a rule for almsgiving, and a thousand other schemes and rules of Christ; not one of which is calculated in accommodation to man's imperfections, but in accommodation to God's perfections; not in measure with man's weakness, but in measure with the Spirit's power; not for the strength of fallen nature, but for the sufficiency of the grace of God. And shall the individual traits of the Christian character be superhuman, and the whole Christian not be superhuman; shall the Christian be superhuman, and the missionary not be three times superhuman?

Stumble, therefore, who pleaseth at the severity of these institutions of the missionary; I glory in them. Tame them down who pleaseth; I, while I live, will uphold their sublimity. Temporise with them who please, they do it at their proper risk. Let it be mine to love and reverence my Saviour's words. Nay, moreover, let them who please cool down the temper of the missionary, and lower the mark of his high calling; be it mine to rouse his spirit, and if duty hindered not, to rouse my own spirit to the height of the undertaking. When the missionaries, the forlorn hope of our warfare, issue from the gate of our camp, let us cheer them with songs of ancient chivalry, with examples of ancient victory; let the daughter of Zion brace the heart of her warlike sons, with her heaven-derived minstrelsy; that they may go forth in the spirit of the mighty men of old, and scale the steep which frowneth upon flesh and blood, and plant the good standard of the faith upon the loftiest battlement of the enemy's strongest hold,—which, strong and lofty though it be, is not more strong than the strength of our God, nor more lofty than the flights of our faith,—which, strong and lofty though it be, is permitted thus high to rise and thus sternly to frown, only that it may prove the good temper of the warrior's soul, and prove before the high witnesses of the contest how humanity in the weakest of Christ's servants is stronger than death and the grave, than earth and hell, and can triumph over them, and lead them captives, as did the great Founder and everlasting Captain of the missionary work. Therefore, I say, let the lineament of perfection stand flaming forth, because it is the

failing of human nature to rest satisfied with its attainments, and to come to a stand in its progress, through the might and multitude of surrounding objects. 'Unto feeble and faithless man, there needeth always a voice like to that which was given unto Moses when the people pressed between the angry sword of Pharaoh, and the raging sea stood still in sore dismay:—"Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward." And of all men, the missionary needeth this voice the most, because his course is the roughest, and his enemies the most inveterate. As the Baptist came in the desert, so he cometh in the moral wilderness and spiritual desert of human life; and though he be nothing but a voice, he crieth out, "Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight, let every valley be filled, and every mountain and hill be brought low, let the crooked be made straight, and the rough places be made smooth." Such a one shall have in his teeth a phalanx of opposition, and he hath need of a heart like a lion's heart, and of a wing like an eagle's wing, and there must be upon his banner, Forward, Forward; and that he may never faint or fail, his banner should be this divine portrait of a perfect missionary, this safe-conduct and assurance of ultimate success, to flame over the darkness of his path, like the pillar of fire which directed Israel in the watches of the night.

CONCLUSION.

From the Missionary Doctrine.

WHILE I contend with all my might that the portraiture of the missionary given by Messiah, with His instructions for the perilous voyage, should not be hid from the sight and study of the Church, but live in its few grand and simple lineaments, untouched by any mortal hand, and unsoftened by the compromising taste of any age; and that every one who looks to this, the highest preferment in the kingdom of Christ, should be qualified according to the testament of our King, over which testament the Church is the guardian to execute it faithfully, not to enlarge or abridge it in one jot or tittle: I am far from intending, as the conclusion of the whole matter, that no one shall make trial and experiment of this service until he feel the image of Messiah perfected in his soul, or that God will withhold His blessing from the rude beginnings and mistrustful settings-out, of this high and holy calling. As God doth know, and my conscience beareth me witness, it is not to discourage or repel any spirit which feels stirred to attempt the undertaking, but to encourage and attract all Christian spirits by its ethereal excellence and transcendent glory, that I would preserve the standard perfection of this character unreduced and unveiled before every eye. And if any one think that by the opposite course of reducing its lofty dimensions, or veiling its heavenly purity, he will recommend this or any other part of the Christian system to the world, he doth err, nothing knowing the end of Christianity, or the nature of the world. By doing so, he shall but place the world on good terms with itself, and mislead still further its false estimation of its own wretched conditions, while he prostitutes the great boon of heaven, which was given not to please the deluded world, but to

redeem it out of its present self-satisfaction and self-complacency. The world is to be undeceived with respect to all its ideas of greatness and goodness; its heroism to be despoiled, its virtues put to shame, its boast and glory mocked, by the new school of character and action which the gospel introduceth, in order to cast all its conditions into the shade, and force them to confess that they are nothing. The divine stature and heavenly majesty, the unstained purity and tender mercy, and the self-divested, self-devoted disinterestedness of the *new* man, created in the image of God, are intended to silence the empty boastfulness of the *old* man, to call forth spiritual faculties from their hiding-places of ease and selfishness, and to offer a wisdom and righteousness, an honour and glory of another kind than that whereof nature is ambitious, and wherewithal she is content. It is not by *indulging* nature, therefore, in her false judgments and depraved tastes, but by *rebuking* her, by exhibiting ideas and forms of higher things, that she is to be led onward to perfection. Her own self-love will draw the standard down, without any help on your part, and in spite of all your endeavours the other way. Your office, therefore, is to propound to her no second edition of the things revealed from heaven for her regeneration, but the very things, if you would humble her, beat her out of her proud refuges, prostrate her in sorrow and repentance, and bring her to be an earnest suitor for the sufficient grace and perfect strength of God. And he who shrinks from the perusal of these new forms of character, because they are too high for him, and cannot be entered into at one attempt, and would therefore have them lowered, doth err no less, than he doth who, to serve his error, would bring them down to his low desire or faithless timidity. For it is wholly to misstate the nature of this holy operation, to imagine that it is finished at one *fiat* as creation was at first, and that the child of God starteth at once into being and perfect manhood. We grow in grace as we grow in nature, from the new birth, through the helplessness of babes, the weakness of childhood, the instability of youth, to the maturity of perfect men in Christ. And it is by exercise we grow, for the grace of God is a vital principle which begetteth life and action. By this new life

and action of the soul's faculties, we do both discern the presence of that grace which we have received, and our need of more, which we receive in due time after we have proved ourselves faithful over the few things already committed to our trust. And so we go on from grace to grace, and from strength to strength, by diligently occupying that which we have, and fulfilling those duties which are meet to our present infirmity. Therefore, the perfections of holiness presented in Scripture, and the sublimities of character exemplified by Christ, ought to be constantly kept full in our view, that we may know what the Lord our God requireth of us, and how far we come short of His glory; whence are fed the fountains of our penitence and humility, at which prayer refresheth her too feeble voice, and the Lord hearing her refreshed voice, supplieth all our wants in due season, out of His inexhaustible fulness. And thus, in a circle, from the idea of perfection, to the consciousness of weakness, and from the consciousness of weakness, to the increase of strength, and from the increase of strength, to the increase of performance, and from the increase of performance, to the idea of still higher perfection, we approach more and more near to that purity of holiness and sublimity of character, without the knowledge and perusal of which we should not have known our deficiency, and not knowing our deficiency, not have besought for higher aid, and not beseeching the aid of Heaven, should not have received the grace which is sufficient for us, and the strength which is perfected in weakness.

If such be the progression of the Christian graces, it is most manifest that whosoever can recover a true Christian idea from the corrupting hand and compromising spirit of his age, and give it to the world in its original form and beauty, doth serve the best interests of his age, though he may somewhat trouble its present self-sufficiency. For though he do rebuke the imperfect measures with which the over-easy times are satisfied, and turn against himself the zeal which he disturbeth in its well-meant but ill-informed courses, he doth open to all candid and truth-loving spirits a higher region, to which they may cast their longings, and for the occupation of which they may weary Heaven with their humble prayers. And if any

one, in the couch of his contentment, should feel himself rebuked of listless, self-satisfied ease, he ought, while he plucketh up his pilgrim's staff, and manfully addresseth himself to another stage of his progress, give thanks unto God, who sent a messenger to rouse his spirit afresh, and shew him the way to new enjoyments and new entertainments of his spiritual life.

If, therefore, in the idea of the missionary, which we have sketched in the first of these orations, and which in the two latter we have sought to fix and make lasting by many fiery ordeals, there be anything more enlarged and elevated than that which at present prevaileth in the Church; the use to which it should be put, after it hath been first tried by non-conforming truth, is to rouse the spirit of missionaries to still higher aims, to whet the present zeal of the Church to a still finer edge, and to set on fire whatever is noble and generous and devoted in the breasts of godly men. It were totally to misuse the truth, and to misunderstand the whole economy of grace, for any one to take offence at the height and purity of the character delineated above, or to withdraw his shoulder from the missionary work, because the work turneth out to be a more stiff-necked work than he had at first conceived. For, as it is the perfect purity of the law which slays our self-sufficiency, arouseth our dormancy, and, like a good schoolmaster, forceth our childish reluctancy to betake itself to Christ for help; so is it the nobleness of the missionary character, its independence of all natural means, and indifference to all human patronage, its carelessness of all earthly rewards, and contempt of the arithmetic of visible and temporal things, which force the man who would essay it, to pass out of those resources human nature fostereth within herself, and have his refuge and dependence upon the Spirit of God, for sustenance, for patronage, for reward, and for a rule of procedure. And after all he can do in this kind, it will still be the complaint of every good and faithful missionary, that he hath not been able to eradicate self-confidence, that root of bitterness which poisons spiritual health, and brings on a prostration of spiritual strength. So that these deprivations of Christ are but incumbrances kindly removed, weights cast away, and beset-

ting sins (sins that beset every man) warned away from the missionary, in consideration of the arduous race which he hath undertaken to run.

Seeing, then, that every Christian grace hath its slenderest beginnings, as well as its ultimate attainments, it is to be inferred that the missionary is not perfected without use, nor by one effort of faith carried to so great a height above sublunary things. We are told of the mighty Nazarite, under the former dispensation, that "the Spirit of the Lord began to move him at times in the camp of Dan, between Zorah and Ashtaol." So when the Spirit of the Lord begins to move the Gospel-Nazarite, though it be in his native village, his native town, or his father's house, let him obey its movements, and not quench them, but follow onwards at their bidding. And even in this, the infancy of his calling, he will find it needful to renounce the approbation of the world, perhaps the affection of his friends, certainly his own ease and natural pleasure, with many other things dearer to life than a meal of meat or a change of raiment. And as he obeys the Divine voice which speaks within his soul for the salvation of men, and encounters the strokes of their undiscerning blindness to that which is spiritual, he will experience so much support of the Spirit, such inward joy and satisfaction, that his faith will gather courage, and spread its wings abroad, beyond the confines of his father's house, his native village, or his native town. He will grow so full of faith, and contemplative of things unseen, as to forget his trust in sight, and dependence upon the things that are. Inward assurances of God's direction will become so strong, the monitions of His Spirit so audible, the commands of Christ to go forth unto all nations so imprinted in fire upon his heart, and invocations from the perishing souls of the heathen will wax so loud and frequent in his ear, and his whole inward man become so restless and aroused, that he will have no peace till he arise and go forth. This strength of faith hath a beginning in the soul like the grains of a mustard seed, which being crushed or neglected in the embryo, will never grow to the largest tree of the forest, in whose branches the birds of the air build their nests, and under whose boughs the beasts of the field have their

habitations. The word of God at first is a spark, then it is a burning coal, at length it is a consuming fire within the hearts of His servants, and they are weary of forbearing, and they cannot stay nor hold their peace; they must speak or they must die, and though they should die they will speak; then have they no rest, but hasten over land and over sea, over rocks and trackless deserts; they cry aloud and spare not, and will not be hindered; in the prisons they lift up their voices, and in the tempests of the ocean they are not silent; before awful councils and throned kings, they witness in behalf of the truth; nothing will quench their voice but death, and in the article of death, ere yet the spiry flame and rolling smoke have suffocated the organs of the soul, they speak, they pray, they testify, they confess, they beseech, they warn, and at length they bless the cruel people. But to arrive at this supremacy of human nature, the perfection of the missionary, that most perfect form of manhood, many degrees must be passed through and much discipline endured. These high graces are of gradual progress, not attained without hard and patient trials, which are to be had in the missionary field, not out of it. Therefore it is expedient, for the very attainment of perfection, that the missionary should make proof of what faith and spiritual strength he is already possessed, in order that, being found worthy, he may have an increase of talents from the Master of the House. To take the *spolia opima* of the war, he must be inured to every adventure and address in arms. And, therefore, with what zeal I discover and set forth the form of the high calling, and urge the souls of missionaries to read it, with that zeal also I urge them to every step by which it is to be reached, looking not at what is behind, as if they had already attained or were already perfect, but looking to the things which are still before, and pressing onward to the mark.

And whether the blessing of God will be vouchsafed to the lower degrees of this majestic character, no one can doubt who knoweth anything of His revelations, which are not for the perfect; but that we may grow up to the stature of the perfect. He blesseth the humblest effort to advance: He rewardeth the smallest measure of attainment. The very

thought and imagination of good He blesseth with an inward satisfaction of the soul. Nay, even sorrow and penitence for evil committed, and the relaxation of wickedness before any contrary movement hath been made, He regardeth with approbation, and rewardeth with a certain dawn of hope and foretaste of peace. And of all His revelations this is the spirit: that He is the origin, the promoter, and the strength of every good thought within our breast, and of every good cause which hath an existence in the world, or is yet to be brought into being. Therefore, at home or abroad, whoever out of a pure heart seeketh to promote the gospel of Christ, which is the world's redemption and salvation, may rely upon a blessing; and the more pure his intention, the more will it be approved of God; and the more spiritual his means and instruments, the more speed will he come; and when his whole heart, strength, soul, and mind, are brought over from resting upon the visible to rest upon the invisible helps, then his horn shall be exalted, and the full measure of the Lord's blessing poured out upon his handiwork.

Though God hath appointed to the minister at the altar, no more provision than that he shall live by the altar at which he ministers, He refuseth not to bless the pious labours of the bishop who owneth a palace, and is dignified with the title of lord. Though He hath interdicted His disciples from dignities, He doth not therefore blight or wither the pious labours of the archbishop who hath precedency of all dignitaries except those of the royal blood. Nevertheless, His ordinance of the pastoral office standeth sure; and in proportion as it is delivered out of these unfavourable conditions of rank and riches, prospereth the more. So with the missionary. The good missionary may take his own wisdom for his guide, and furnish himself with all natural resources, and depend upon the patronage of man, rejecting those eternal instructions by which he ought to be guided, and God will not fail to bless him according to the measure of his faith and zeal. Nevertheless, be it known unto him, that he cannot have the full horn of His blessing, until he shew more dutifulness, and trust in his Father; more resemblance to Messiah, his great ensample. It is well that he hath gone out to the battle, but it is not well

that he hath gone out armed not according to the nature of the service. It is well that he hath arrayed himself upon the right side, yet not well that he hath so many open rivets in his armour. He hath done well to land upon the shores of the enemy, for the emancipation of which he is to contend, but it is cowardly that he hath all things so well prepared for retreat. He should have burnt his ships and cast the scabbard of his sword away, and trusted in the goodness of his cause, his Leader's good conduct, sufficient wisdom, and all-conquering power.

Therefore, it is not to be inferred that these instructions preclude any one from going in the way or manner he pleaseth; they do but inform all which is the right way and manner: neither is it to be inferred that because God hath blessed with partial success other ways of going forth, that they are therefore sanctioned as of equal authority with this which is written in His word. I think the lame and partial success which hath attended modern missions in the way of conversion, compared with those of former times, should have humbled us to revise the principles upon which we have proceeded, and see whether there be not a large mixture of human wisdom and creature-trust in our measures. But it is not yet time to enter into the proper office and duty of a missionary society, which is surely not infallible, but liable to be canvassed, judged, and, if need be, censured and rebuked by Christian judgments. This will come in a more advanced part of our discourse; and the subject which should now come to our hand is to justify and recommend the practice of this missionary constitution, which we have drawn from the words of Messiah, and defended from the attempts of temporising men to annul it, and so deprive the Church of what may be termed the principles of her foreign policy.

When I shall come to justify the wisdom and commend the practice of this self-denying missionary ordinance, I will not stoop so low from the high dignity of the subject, as to notice the sneers and sarcasms and disappointed speeches with which the sensual man, and those spiritual men in whom the sensual man still struggles for the ascendency, will assail the principle of no scrip, no provisions, no accommodations for

the journey, no stately deputations to the authorities of the place, no travelling charges, nor any of all the other fat and convenient things, which are now held almost as indispensable to the carrying on of a religious work, as heretofore they were to a county canvass, a judicial assize, or a parliamentary commission to inspect the condition of the realm. Those who have accustomed themselves to carpet warfare, cannot like the conflict of naked steel; those who have rejoiced in the countenance of a wealthy or a noble man, as in the face of heaven, must needs sink to the centre, when they are told to go forth where every fat and fair countenance is set against them like a flint. With such objectors I will have nothing to do, until they learn out of the Scriptures whence the strength of Israel cometh, and with what arms the lion of the tribe of Judah doth triumph over His foes. They need to learn what are the first principles of that kingdom, concerning the high offices of which the present discourse is held; and they must be given into the hands of some wardens of the outports, to be a little instructed in the vulgar language and household customs of the holy land, before they can be admitted to speculate on these its high and noble commissions, of which their jokes and sarcasms do only betray their gross and blinded ignorance. But, on the other hand, every objection and doubt which presents itself in a serious frame of truth, and breathes the brotherly spirit which is proper to the disciples of Christ, I promise to do my endeavour to remove out of the way, that I may carry the greater consent of my readers along with me to the question, how this constitution will answer in practice. And for the purpose of hearing all that can be said against Messiah's institute, and all that can be said in favour of the innovations which have usurped its place, I delay at present going into the other parts of this discourse, content that I have laid before the Church what seemeth to me the sound doctrine concerning the missionary question.

Perhaps some one, able to defend it, may in the meantime rise up, certainly many will rise up to impugn it; and though I should have to undertake the work alone, I will, by the grace of God, most certainly undertake to justify in practice what I have delineated in idea; being convinced that, if, as Milton

hath said, for the loss of single truths whole nations have fared the worse, for the loss of these few verses of the gospel, the whole heathen world hath fared and will surely fare the worse, and the day of their salvation be far, far off postponed. And not the heathen world suffer alone, but the Church of Christ amongst ourselves, to whose wounds this missionary constitution, if adopted, would afford a healing balm. For being set up as sufficient, and upheld as binding, the missionaries, from whatever sect proceeding, would tend to unity of spirit, and recognise each other as brethren, and bring back with them the happy oblivion of those uncharitable divisions, which are fatal to the communion of the body of Christ, and destructive to its vigorous exertions and great success at home. As it hath come to pass in science, that astronomy, which is conversant with the distant sphere, did bring to the earth the knowledge of geography, and extend navigation and commerce, which are the best guardians of community and peace among the divided nations; so might it come to pass, that the missionaries who are conversant with distant regions, if chosen by one principle and made obedient to one walk and conversation, might return home and become the mediators of our discords, and teach the body of the Church to know its own constitution, which is charity; and the condition of its welfare and prosperity, which is communion.

The argument for the perpetuity and unchangeableness of the missionary constitution is now concluded, and resteth upon these main pillars of truth, the instructions of our Lord to the first missionaries, four times recorded in the evangelists, unrepealed, unsupplemented, unabridged; the obedience thereto of all the apostles and first ministers of the gospel, whose record is in the Scriptures, (their deviations, when they do deviate, being always by excess, and never by defect, of our Lord's injunctions;) the necessary law of the Spirit's operation; the constant condition of God's chosen messengers from the time of the patriarchs; the constant and unchanging form of the work which they have to do in converting the nations; and the perfect keeping which there is between the form of the missionary as given by our Lord, and the other parts of the Christian institution.

I am aware how this position is to be assailed by those who have built up a system of administration on which they have set their heart to call it perfect and infallible, and which I charge as exceedingly imperfect, destined to much improvement, and with its improvement, destined to much greater simplicity and larger success. And I am alive to the inveteracy of hatred, and the injustice of argument, with which this position will be treated; and conceive it right to put the Christian Church upon their guard, that they sell not this question, in which the present and future generations of the world are concerned, to the highest names upon a subscription list, or discern it by the ostracism of the people, or yield it to the voice of a hireling and sectarian press: which courts are not competent to the issue. I solemnly charge the Church, by my authority of a minister ordained to keep and watch over the verities of the holy gospel, that they determine the issue that will be joined between us by a trial of these six counts: 1st, Whether Christ's instructions were for that first journey, or for all the journeys of His missionaries. 2d, Whether the apostles walked in them or not; and if they deviated, whether they deviated *in* the spirit or *from* the spirit of these instructions. 3d, Whether the Holy Ghost, in proportion as He possesseth the spirit of a man, doth not lift him out of worldly dependence into an assured faith upon the providence and promises of God. 4th, Whether God's preachers and prophets and missionaries, by whom He extended and redeemed His Church, from the time it was the single family of Jacob down to the time that the Lion of the tribe of Judah came, were not stripped bare of earthly refuges and reliances before being employed, or brought to that condition before being prospered in their work. 5th, Whether the obstacles to the spiritual kingdom, which God heretofore chose *things that are not* to bring to naught, be not still the same, and by the same means to be overcome. 6th, Whether this idea and outward form of the missionary, contained in Messiah's instructions, be not consistent and in keeping with the idea of a pastor, with the idea of a private Christian, and every other idea which is revealed by Christ for the redeeming and perfecting of the fallen condition of humanity. Upon

these six counts I will risk the issue and stand by the award of the question, Whether Messiah's constitution was intended for an unchangeable constitution in the Church, or is to be patched and mended, helped and repaired, and accommodated by wiser heads to the changing condition of the world. Whether, in this great work, the catholic Church is to act upon a common principle and be guided by a common law, or each sect of it to adopt a principle which may seem to it the most expedient, and follow a rule which may appear to it the most wise. Whether the churches which they may be honoured to plant, are to have the character of *the order* that planteth them, like the Jesuit settlements of Paraguay; or to have the character of the primitive churches, which were of one heart and mind, because the apostles were obedient to the instructions of one common Lord. Whether, in fine, we are to open in the hearts of our missionaries inlets to every spirit of hypocrisy, avarice, and ambition, and close as many inlets to the SPIRIT OF TRUTH, quenching by our prudences and policies the one everlasting Spirit of God, and giving vent to as many spirits, crusading, Jesuitical, commercial, or political, as there are diverse ages in the Church, which are not, like the ages of the world, fourfold,—of gold, of silver, of brass, of iron,—but manifold, according to the degree of impurity and incompleteness in the doctrine which is preached, and the degree of laxness or lordliness in the discipline which is administered in the churches.

ORDINATION CHARGE.

ORDINATION CHARGE

TO THE

MINISTER OF THE SCOTS CHURCH, LONDON WALL,

MARCH 15, 1827.

REVEREND SIR, and very dear Brother in the Ministry of the Gospel of Christ,—Of all the offices which are sustained in this world, you have now, by the solemn ordinance of the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery, been set apart to the most burdensome and responsible: of all the churches called Christian, you have this day chosen to take upon you the vows of the most severe and uncompromising: and, I may add, that you have accepted a call, and are now ordained to labour, in the most difficult portion of the vineyard of the Lord. Therefore gird up your loins like a man; and hear me while I set forth at length what the Church of Scotland expecteth at your hands in this city, wherein she hath invested you with the sacred character of a minister. And that I may keep order in my charge, I shall present it to you under these five heads:—first, the student or scholar; secondly, the preacher or minister; thirdly, the pastor; fourthly, the churchman; and fifthly, the man.

First, then, my brother, be instructed of one who rather needeth to be instructed himself than to administer instruction to any, that the Church expecteth thee to grow in all knowledge and in all wisdom, as thou growest in years; not to forget aught which thou hast learned in thy youth, but to increase the store thereof, in all kinds which may be profitable to thy ministry, but especially in the Holy Scriptures, and the qualifications for the sacred office, in which thy proficiency

before the Presbytery hath appeared. For we have no examining chaplains, as hath our sister Church, for taking trials of those who desire licence to preach, or ordination to a charge; and the order of doctor, which our Church constituted for the searching of deep learning and the handling of difficult questions, has become a mere nominal title; and there are no fellowship endowments in our Universities to preserve a separate order of learned men: so that each one of us ministers and pastors hath to support the burden of the learning and scholarship of our Church. This you must set yourself to do as a part of your bounden duty, perfecting yourself in the knowledge of the original tongues, and applying yourself to the critical study of the Scriptures; in order that you may be equal to any disputation which you may be called to maintain with the Jew, the Papist, the infidel, the heretic, and the schismatic; who are best foiled from the Scriptures themselves. I know that you have apprehended that peculiar structure of the Scriptures, which I call the *prophetic method* of Divine truth, always to foretell and to fulfil and to further its own growth unto the end: whereby the Bible, though consisting of many pieces at different times composed, doth manifest itself to every wise scholar to be the one word of that omniscient God to whom time past, present, and to come are alike. Besides the careful study of the structure of the Book itself, in order to be convinced of its oneness and Divine original, I charge you to become acquainted with the history of the Church, both of the election and the apostasy, which in Holy Writ is brought down to the apostles' times, and elsewhere scattered up and down till our times. In doing this, you will perfect yourself in the history of the nations; which are but the apostasy of the patriarchal religion, as the ten tribes were of the Jewish, and the Papacy is of the Christian. Whence it cometh to pass, that the mysteries, and Sibylline books, and popular fables of Polytheism are but patriarchal revelations disguised: whence also the Lord continued a certain light of prophecy amongst the nations, and commissioned His prophets, and sent His apostles to them. Besides this large generosity of God to the whole world, there is a portion of it which hath kept the seed that was more plentifully scat-

tered therein, to the history of which you will most diligently attend, as it hath been successively possessed and overruled by the four monarchies of Daniel, under the last of which the world still holdeth together, though ready to be dissolved. My brother, take this book of the world's history, not Grotius, or Paley, or Lardner, for the book of evidences to be perused by your mind, and, as there is occasion, to be opened to your people. And next to this history of the fact and growth of revelation, I pray thee, dear brother, to give all diligence to the study and learning of truth, spiritual or metaphysical, in order, that by looking narrowly into the many-sided spirit of man, and its erroneous tendencies to heresy, schism, will-worship, and idolatry, thou mayest learn a due caution of thyself, and a right value for the orthodox creed of the Church, which thou must defend against all gainsayers. Oh, study the history of the orthodox faith, and talk not like an ignorant sectary against creeds, but study thou the errors into which Satan hath deluded the believer, that thou mayest be aware of, and guarded against, his wiles. And, moreover, make thyself acquainted with the history of the Christian apostasy, I mean the Papacy; for thou shalt find therein every truth and ordinance of the Primitive Church, though immured as it were in a Babel of superstition. Brother, know that abomination, and be not silent against it; for it is the abominable thing which God hateth, and which thou must hate if thou at all lovest the Church of Christ. These studies which I have noticed are within our province, and must at no rate be neglected. If thou art able to pass beyond, I warn thee against criticism, which is the region of pride and malice, —and invite thee to physiology, which is the science of life in all its forms and conditions, and of philology, which is the science of words, the forms of human thought. I charge thee, my brother, to arm thyself for the warfare which thou hast to wage from this place against the materialism, the Socinianism, the deism, and the latitudinarianism which are come up against this city, and have overflowed it even unto the neck. Make not thyself a mere sermon-maker, or a talker, or a declaimer, or a clerk of religious accounts, or a committee-man, or a polite payer of visits, or a drudge of any kind. Seek thy

God in thy closet and in thy study; be alone for hours together; be fervent in prayer and meditation; commune with the prophets, and the apostles, and the saints, and the martyrs, and Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith. Do so, I charge thee, that the Church may not be ashamed of thy ignorance or unprofitableness, but rejoice in thee as a good and skilful soldier who knows to defend and to attack on every side of the city of our Zion.

Secondly, In thy capacity of a preacher or minister of the gospel, I charge thee, as a steward of the mysteries of Christ, to know those ordinances which are intrusted to thy administration. The several parts of public worship thou hast to conduct without the help of any service-book or curate; no form to guide thee, which I hope thou wilt never need nor desire to have. O brother, what a weight lieth upon a minister's shoulders; and what need of largest knowledge and most patient study hath he above all men!—First, then, concerning those Psalms, of which I would not forego one out of the collection for all the paraphrases, hymns, and spiritual songs of these Methodistical times. Thou must taste and deeply drink into the spirit of them, and open them to the flock and congregation; for praise without the understanding is praise without the heart, not pleasant in the ear of God. If thou shouldest find it necessary to open the Psalms a little by way of preface, in order to point out Christ and the Church and the kingdom in them, thou wilt do well: they are the essence of Divine truth, the divinest of the inspirations of the Spirit, upon which I charge thee to admit no modern innovations, and in their stead to take no modern substitutes. And stir the people up to love and relish them, which is best done by leading them to know and understand them.—Secondly, thy prayers. O brother, what a burden is laid upon thy spirit, to offer in such a time as this the prayers of the Christian Church: for remember thou pray not for thy people alone, nor for the presbytery alone, nor for the Kirk of Scotland alone, but for the holy catholic Church, and communion of saints; and remember we have not four separate prayers, but as it were four parts of prayer, which together make up the Liturgy of our Sabbath-day. Thou

must not indulge the people by saying the same thing twice over, one for the forenoon company, and the other for the afternoon company, who can make it convenient to attend. It is a day's service, a Sabbath's sacrifice; divided as thou best may. Oh, it is an onerous charge, my brother, this of public prayer; I cannot tell thee how it weighs my spirit down: and I give it in charge to thee to make this part of the ministry thine especial care. Our Church loveth that it should be extempore, and it is best that it should be so; but oh, fill the fountains of thy spirit every week by secret devotion, and painful meditation, and solemn, careful thought of all things. Preaching cometh next in order, which is as it were the food and nourishment of all the rest, the foolishness of God which is wiser than the wisdom of men, the royal ordinance of the kingdom. Here put forth all thy knowledge, all thy wisdom, all thy strength of manhood, with all the gifts and graces of the Divine nature. Take thy liberty: occupy thy commission: beat down the enemies of the Lord; wound and heal; break down and build up again. Be of no school; give heed to none of their rules and canons. Take thy liberty, be fettered by no times, accommodate no man's conveniency, spare no man's prejudice, yield to no man's inclinations, though thou should scatter all thy friends, and rejoice all thine enemies. Preach the gospel: not the gospel of the last age, or of this age, but the everlasting gospel; not Christ crucified merely, but Christ risen: not Christ risen merely, but Christ present in the Spirit, and Christ to be again present in person. Dost thou take heed to what I say? Preach thy Lord in humiliation, and thy Lord in exaltation: and not Christ only, but the Father, the will of the Father. Keep not thy people banqueting, but bring them out to do battle for the glory of God and of His Church: to which end thou shalt need to preach them the Holy Ghost, who is the strength of battle. And hark ye, brother, be not afraid in those days, to be called Antinomian; but preach the gospel freely. Let the sectarian ignorance and malice of this city box the whole compass of heresy with thee as they have done with me, in order to find thy true course; but still while they are blaming and blaspheming, be thou

preaching the offices of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, in the salvation of poor sinners. And take a long and a strong pull at the work: if they will measure thee, let it be by the hours and not by the minutes. We must lift the barriers up, brethren, and beat the sentinels back, and make room, and make large room, if we would have any use of our weapons, or profit of the fight.—Lastly, come the sacraments, which I pray thee to study from the Scriptures, or any author older than a century; but at thy peril from any later; and give no heed to what is talked upon baptism and the Lord's supper in these clear-headed times. Brother, to my certain knowledge the atmosphere of theology hath been so long clear and cloudless, that there hath been neither mist nor rain these many years: and even to talk of a mystery is out of date. But thou must preach Christ in a mystery, and shew the very great mysteries of godliness, especially of these two sacraments. Get thee out of this bright sunshine of the intellect, and meditate the deep mysteries of the Spirit, which the natural man perceiveth not. When they talk of plainness and perspicuity, to thy text, my brother: to thy warfare of prayer and meditation; try the depths; sound with thy deepest line, my brother. Oh, I charge thee enter into the mysteries of these two sacraments: if I should hear of thee setting them forth as bare and naked signs, I will be the first to charge thee with a most dangerous error. Fill these vessels with spiritual water: awaken the faith of the people; let them come to them in earnest faith, not in empty ignorance; in mysterious expectation and assurance of God's spiritual blessing; not in a clear-headed belief that nothing is to be expected or to be received. O brother, if I were to tell thee what fruit of my ministry I have had from these two sacraments, thou wouldest not be surprised at the zeal with which my discourse doth clothe itself.

And now I come to the *third* head of this charge—the pastoral, which I begin by telling thee, that thou wilt find the very idea of it departed and lost in this city; for a certain idea of society and companionship which is totally fruitless of any spiritual good. But thou must recover it as thou wouldest answer to the great Shepherd of the sheep. Of which office,

give me heed, it is the first part to give thy benediction unto the flock, to bless them, men, women, and children, at thy meetings and at thy partings; not with light words, but with a bishop's blessing. This is old fashioned, my brother, but I am speaking to the minister of an old-fashioned church, which heretofore had no other custom: and, moreover, our fathers would not break bread without a solemn word of prayer which would weary a congregation in these times. If thou neglect this, and allow Satan to have the first word, he will have the last, and for the most part he will have the whole. Be thou the pastor always; less than the pastor never. Go thus, or go not at all. Thou art an ordained minister from henceforth: thou art a shepherd of the people. Be thou then a bishop. Because thou hast no palace, no, nor even house of thine own to dwell in, thou hast the more need to defend thyself from being misconstrued into a clerk or a school-boy. Dost thou hear what I say? I have met with more insolence from Scottish lads conceiving me a mere Scottish lad, and Scottish men of substance conceiving me a Scottish adventurer, than from the peers and princes of this realm. I will not call thee brother, if thou force not thy people to regard thee as their pastor. When thou goest to visit thy people, take an elder with thee, and by no means excuse his not attending, and teach the people to receive it as an honour done them by the rulers of the church: and when thou visitest the sick, do the same. Consult a common time convenient for the elder and thyself. But this is not enough; thy people must come to thee, and seek thy counsel and thy prayers. Have no idlers about thee: have no spare time: if they come, they come for holy ends; if not, they had better not come at all. And thou wilt have to lament how few do come near thee for spiritual counsel or instruction, and how many complain that thou comest not near them in an easy way, to pass an hour, and so forth. But go not for any such ends of pastime. Hearest thou what I say? At no rate go for any such ends. Thou wilt find the day too short for serious duties: at night thou wilt find how few prayers thou hast offered, how few texts considered, how few duties discharged. But if any say, Remember me in thy prayers;

make a note of that, and forget it not: or if he say, Pray for me in such a distress, forget it not. O brother, I know from experience what difficulties abide thee in this field: gird up thy loins, and contend with them like a man. As the office of a shepherd is to every sheep of his flock, so is thine to all this people, who have called thee to be their pastor, whose call thou hast accepted; whose love and desire each for the other we have this day solemnly ratified and joined. Thou must be willing to give thy life for every one of them, to wash their feet, to minister to them in health and in sickness, in wealth and in poverty, in good and in bad report. For why? because they are the Lord's—because they are the flock of Christ which He hath purchased with His own blood. Feed them, my brother; tend them, my brother; shew forth unto them a shepherd's care: and be assured that the chief Shepherd, when He shall appear, will give thee a crown of glory which fadeth not away. Then the flock will yield increase; and they will make thee good return: thou shalt eat of their milk, and be filled with their fatness: thou shalt be clothed with their fleece, and thou shalt bless the day wherein thou first tookest a sheep-hook and pastoral staff into thy hand. Remember what is written of this pastoral office by the prophet Ezekiel, to which I refer thee, for I must hasten, seeing I would fain lay before thee, in this brief compass, the full measure of a Scottish presbyter's office, that my heart may be discharged of the love it bears thee, and our mother Church may be satisfied with me in the office which she hath this day appointed me to bear.

Fourthly, I would charge thee with thy duty as a churchman; that is, an ordained minister of the Kirk of Scotland, whom the presbytery have this day taken bound by solemn obligation to maintain the doctrine, discipline, government, and laws thereof, which thou must study, imbuing thyself with the spirit of our reformers, and martyrs, and covenanters, and looking through the cloud of the Papal apostasy into the Presbyterian discipline and primitive worship of the Culdees. Thou art this day honoured to be a minister of the most primitive Church under heaven, not excepting the Waldenses or the Albigenses: for though the apostasy had possession of

the court of Scotland for about three centuries, it never had possession of the whole land; in the western fastnesses of which the true fire continued to live upon the altar. I pray thee, brother, to remember this day that thou art the member of a Church which hath oft covenanted together for the purity of Christian policy to testify against all Papal and Prelatical invasions; which God built up in the whirlwind, and strengthened in the midst of the storm. Thou wilt hear much idle and ignorant talk about the Church of Christ, as if in speaking of the Kirk of Scotland or the Church of England, we spake not of the Church of Christ. Turn a deaf ear to their envious prattle, and tell them that the Lord himself addresseth His seven churches by their several names, and giveth them instructions according to their diverse conditions. This is the language in which they are wont covertly to speak against Established Churches: for they are come to the condition of not being able to bear the establishment of religion, to foster which our fathers, with the exception of a handful, did unanimously teach to be the first duty of the civil magistrate. Thou must not lose thyself in the tossing waves of opinion, which waste all things in this city; but stand upon the stable rock on which the fathers rested. Thou art this day one of a body: in the presbytery we expect of thee obedience to the statutes which we obey: in thy session, we expect of thee to rule and moderate all things according to the laws of the Church. Thou art not thine own master, that thou shouldest flinch in anything from that model of church government which God hath blessed to us and to our fathers. We hinder thee not from brotherly communion with all who are not of the apostasy, with all of the Church rooted and grounded in the faith of the Lord's divinity, and calling Him, and Him only, Head. But against those who deny His divinity, (these are the true Antichrists,)—against those who have given His glory to another, pope, virgin, or saint, (these are the apostasy,)—thou must contend unto the death. As a churchman, thou owest brotherly love to the Church of England, such as the church of Philippi did to the church of Ephesus, and both to the church of Jerusalem; but thou owest also rebuke and reproof for her backslidings in doctrine and discipline; which

also she oweth to us: and both debts of love must be discharged. To the Nonconformists also, who hold sound doctrine, thou owest brotherly love; and rebuke and reproof also thou owest them for their uncharitable spirit towards us and all Establishments. To the Papacy, and to the Socinian, thou owest no mercy. Unfold their vileness, cry against them with all thy might. Superstition on the one hand, liberality on the other, (for that sign of the prophet is accomplishing now when the churl is called liberal,)—I say, brother, superstition on the one hand, and liberality on the other, thou must fight against with the two-edged sword of the faith. Our Church hath warred a good warfare against the former: if she will now war as good a warfare against the latter, the Lord will still continue His favour unto her. Thou knowest, brother, thou well dost know, the serpent-cunning of this liberal spirit. Be wiser than it is, be more harmless than it professeth to be, (but it is deadly poison against Christ;) put on thine armour of divine intelligence, and contend against it as a churchman, as a member of Christ's Church, as a presbyter of the Kirk of Scotland. Brother, that liberality is killing our children; it hath already slain its tens of thousands of the children of the Scottish Church in this metropolis; and thou must divest it and expose it. Wilt thou not bring out the complete armour of religion against the irreligiousness of liberality? Then I tell thee God will not own thy ministry in this city; for this city is sick unto death, and dying of the mortal wounds which she hath received from it. God called thee to this metropolitan city, and hath planted thee here by a wonderful providence: therefore look to it, my brother, and do thy Master some service herein. If thou thinkest to build up this dismantled Church, by merely fulfilling the office of a minister and pastor to the people in this house assembling, thou dost miserably err. I tell thee thou art not merely the minister of London Wall Church, but thou art a presbyter of the Kirk of Scotland, to combine thine endeavours with the presbytery for gathering our poor countrymen preyed on by Satan under the guise of liberality. Thou art a churchman of the holy catholic Church, to take up the cross of Christ and fight the good fight against the devil, the world, and the

flesh, in all their forms: thou art a prophet to cry aloud to the Ninevites, to this Babylon, which, after enjoying the light of God so long, is now beginning to deny that it was from Christ that light of God did come. For thy duties as a churchman, I refer thee to Christ's instructions to the angels of the seven churches: and I proceed,

Lastly, To speak to thee of thy duties as a man; for this is the basis upon which all the other forms of character are built, and thou must give good heed to it. I speak not of the natural form of man which thou art of, for this thou hast crucified with Christ, and it must live no longer; but I speak of those many functions which the new man hath to discharge towards those to whom we are related by other ties than the ministerial, or the pastoral, or the ecclesiastical,—to friends and to acquaintance, to servants, to men in general, and to the society of which thou art a member, and to the civil polity of which thou art a subject. For the present, thou must dwell, like a wayfaring man, in a lodging; but I trust thou wilt soon be master of thine own house, to give thy people a pattern of household government, as Joshua resolved to do, and as every bishop and every elder is required to do. Thou wilt keep hospitality; and accumulate riches at thy peril. Oh, if thou grow rich,—oh, if thou shouldst die rich, I will be ashamed of thee. Look at the hard hearts of rich men; look at their vain self-importance; look at their contempt of Christ; and pray, oh earnestly pray, to be kept from that greatest snare. Thy cloak and thy parchments, brother,—that is, thy decent apparel and thy books,—be these thy riches, and then thou canst speak out against Mammon, and tell those men of thousands and tens of thousands, whom thou art surrounded with, what they should do with their treasures. If thou spare them, God will not spare thee. I give thee it in charge this day, that thou reprove them and their accumulations sharply. Keep thou hospitality. Shew thou to lordly prelates what the word bishop meaneth. Shew thou to substantial citizens what the word hospitality meaneth. Shew thou to rich men what the word charity meaneth; and to all, what faith meaneth. Go thou out as poor a man as thou came in; and let them bury thee when

thou diest. And if God should bless thee with a wife and children, put no money in the bank for them, but write prayers in the record of the book of life: be this thy bank of faith; be this thy exchange, even the providence of God; and let the lords of thy treasury be the prophets and the apostles who went before thee. O my brother, be zealous for the good primitive customs of the Church: abjure thou the prudential maxims of this metallic age. Oh, be thou a man far above this world, living by faith in the world to come like one of the elders who have obtained a good report. Be thou of a bold countenance and a lion heart, of a single eye and a simple spirit: otherwise Satan will soon hedge thee in and mow thee up; he will come to thee as a counsellor, but we of the presbytery, whose voice I now speak are thy counsellors: he will come to thee as a threatener; but who dare meddle with thee who are Christ's anointed minister? he will come to thee as a flatterer; be thou therefore honest and self-denied. If thou do thy duty, as I trust thou wilt, thy dearest friends will come to warn thee, and will exceedingly afflict thee by their apprehensions; but thou art not to be seduced by friends, being this day charged by the whole Church of Christ to be faithful unto Christ, and to no other allegiance. The time is coming; yea, now is, when thou mayest have to testify against wickedness in high places, as did the fathers of the Church: and thou must, and then there will come about thine ears such a hurricane of stormy voices; but, like Elijah, thou must stand in the cleft of the rock till it passeth by. But, if thou hast any floating interest, if thou hast any selfish end, canst thou stand all this, my brother? no, thou wilt shrink and yield every limb of thee. If thou art not ready to die, get ready as fast as thy mayest; for the soldier in the battle who is not ready to die hath two enemies to fight: and if thou be not ready to die for Christ, thou mayest have a hundred; but if thou be ready to die for Christ thou hast but one, who is emphatically *the enemy*, against whom, that all thine energies may be collected, give this day all interests, all affections, all gains, all talents, all things unto the Lord, and count them but as dung that thou may win Christ. What the Lord Jesus, who was followed by a multi-

tude, did say to them indiscriminately, I may well turn round and say to thee His soldier, His captain of a hundred, yet, I I trust, to be His captain of a thousand,—"He that would be my disciple must hate father and mother, and sister, and wife, and children, and houses and lands, and his own life also,—must take up his cross, and follow me."

And now, what sayest thou? Who is sufficient for these things? Thou art, Christ strengthening thee; and thinkest thou Christ will be wanting to thee? No, verily. He never sendeth any one a warfare on his own charges. Thou mayest be wanting unto Christ, but never will Christ be wanting unto thee. But what assurance have I, dost thou say? The same which the apostles had, the same which the seventy had, the same which Titus and Timothy and the primitive pastors had,—that Holy Spirit which descended at Pentecost, which hath been present in the Church, which is now present in it, and freely accessible to us all, for all the powers and offices of which Christ's members in their several offices shall be accountable. And hast thou not this day been set apart by the highest symbol, even the laying on of hands? Is that a symbol symbolising nothing? No! it symboliseth every form of the Spirit which Timothy or Titus had. There is now a gift in thee as surely as there was a gift in Timothy, by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. And neglect it not, neglect not the gift of prophecy that is in thee by the laying on of our hands. Thou hast a Spirit this day sealed upon thee by the holy ordinance of the Church, which Paul describeth unto Timothy to be "not the Spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." Thou art not one of the demi-infidels who believe that those ordinances of Christ's appointment are but naked signs. Thou knowest for what thou art this day made responsible; thou knowest what a gift Christ hath this day bestowed upon thee. We have not laid hands suddenly on thee; we have made full proof of thy ministry, of thy doctrine, of thy life. We have this day observed the ordinance of the Church blamelessly. And we believe that Christ will honour His own holy ordinance, to communicate thereby those same gifts of the Spirit which He did communicate in the days of old unto His faithful bishops. Where-

fore I have put thee in remembrance, that thou stir up the gift of God which is in thee by the putting on of our hands. That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us. I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things; and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession; that thou keep this commandment without spot unrebukeable until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ; which in His times He will shew, "who is the blessed and only potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach into; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting." Amen.

HISTORICAL VIEW

OF THE

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND BEFORE THE REFORMATION.

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PART I.

THE EARLY PLANTATION, PROGRESS, AND PROSPERITY OF THE CHURCH IN THE REALM OF SCOTLAND.

THE Christian religion spread itself in the first ages with such amazing rapidity over the world, that the apostle Paul could say, in his Epistle to the Romans, "Have they not heard? Yea, verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the world's end." This was spoken only twenty-eight years from the day of Pentecost, when the gospel began to be preached to the Jews; and eighteen from the time it began to be disseminated amongst the Gentiles. The very choice of the day of Pentecost, when people from all the world were gathered to Jerusalem, with all the circumstances therewith connected, the arresting of the eunuch on his way to Ethiopia, the whole history of the Acts of the Apostles for the space of thirty-two years, as well as the unanimous traditions concerning the labours of the twelve apostles and the seventy disciples, do all combine to shew that it was the purpose of God without delay to proclaim the gospel far and wide over the earth, as a witness unto the nations. We are

not therefore to be surprised at, or to suspect as fabulous, the constant declarations of our earliest historians, that it was preached in Britain by men of the apostolical age; yea, and by the apostles themselves. Witness Paul, who declareth that it was his purpose to preach the gospel in Spain also; witness Eusebius, an ecclesiastical historian of the fourth century, who, as proof of the Divine commission of the apostles, declareth that they had preached the gospel "to the Romans, Persians, Armenians, Parthians, Indians, Scythians, and to those which are called the British Islands;" and Theodoret, a bishop of the Greek Church, surpassed by none in learning and authority, who lived in the fifth age, thus beareth his witness—"These our fishermen, publicans, and tent-makers persuaded not only the Romans and their subjects, but also the Scythians, Sauromatæ, Indians, Persians, Seræ, Hyrcanians, Britons, Cimmerians, and Germans to embrace the religion of Him who had been crucified." And to this effect Gildas, the most ancient of our native historians, writing of the insurrection and revolt which drew on the destruction of the Druids, the ancient priests of this island, doth thus declare the introduction of the gospel to have been coeval with that event:—"In the meantime, Christ the true Sun afforded His rays, that is, the knowledge of His precepts, to this island, benumbed with extreme cold, having been at a great distance from the Sun: I do not mean the sun in the firmament, but the Eternal Sun in heaven." And Tertullian, a celebrated father of the Church, in one of his controversial treatises, written in the year of our redemption 209, declareth, "That those parts of Britain into which the Roman arms had never penetrated, were become subject unto Christ."

I am the more particular in referring to these writers of undoubted authority, as giving weight to the unanimous consent of Scottish authors, and indeed of all tradition whatsoever, that the Christian religion was established in our land by royal authority, in the seventh year of the emperor Severus, by Paschasius, a Sicilian, who found the people wonderfully predisposed to the reception of the truth. This year Archbishop Usher hath determined to be the year 199 or 200, and not 203, as fixed in those traditionary verses cited by Fordun

and Major, by which the memory of this blessed event was preserved.

> "*Christi transactis tribus annis atque ducentis*
> *Scotia Catholicam cœpet inire fidem.*"
>
> "In years from Christ two hundred and three,
> Scotland a Christian kingdom came to be."

We are not, however, to believe that King Donald among the Scots, to whom the glory of this act is given, nor yet King Lucius in the South, who brought his British kingdom under Christ some forty years before, were moved thereto by an impulse of their own all at once received, but by the gradual propagation of the truth throughout their dominions, and the growing inclination of their people to receive it. Indeed, nothing will account for the wonderful readiness with which the people received the new discipline, but the belief that they had been already well leavened with the new doctrine. In the Roman armies during these two centuries it is well known that great multitudes of Christians served; and every conquest which they made in Britain was secured by a Roman colony, wherein Christians sought refuge from the persecution which raged in all other quarters of the empire. Now, before the close of the first century, the Roman arms had penetrated to the foot of the Grampians; and in the second, all the country south of the Friths of Forth and Clyde were secured by fortifications: beyond which lay the region at that time, or afterwards, occupied by the Scotch in the West, and the Picts in the East; to whom alone, therefore, Tertullian can refer, when he declares in the year 209, that "those parts of Britain into which the Roman arms had never penetrated, were become subject unto Christ." The only region "into which the Roman arms had not penetrated," even in the first century, was that which lieth within the line of the Grampians; and when he asserteth, that "this region had become subject unto Christ," he must be understood to mean, that therein superstition and heathenism had yielded to the gospel; not in a few solitary instances, but had found a seat among the people. And the language of Theodoret, quoted above, bears that the apostles themselves had preached in the regions of Britain, beyond the bounds of "the Roman subjec-

tion." This question is altogether disconnected with the great historical questions concerning the origin of the Pictish and Scottish nations, and the times of their several settlements within our realm. No one doubts that there was a people intrepid of heart and powerful in arms, called by the Roman authors Caledonians, who kept their fathers' fields unconquered, and successfully contended with the masters of the world for freedom and independency. Amongst these people, whether the same with the Picts and Scotch or not, we have shewn from various sources that the Christian verity was made known before the end of the first century, and established by royal authority towards the end of the second. For which let the Lord be devoutly acknowledged; seeing it is a glorious pre-eminence yielded to this island, of having been the first region in the world under the government of Christianity, which was not till more than one hundred years after established by Constantine upon the throne of the Roman empire.

Three things mainly contributed to the early establishment of the Christian religion, both in the northern and southern parts of this island. The first of these was the destruction and almost eradication of the Druid superstition, which from the most ancient times prevailed in Britain, with a strength unexampled in any other part of the world. By their learning, and their knowledge of arts and sciences, by their richness in patriarchal traditions, and their legal and political wisdom, the Druids of Great Britain held almost absolute authority over this island; and their fame extended to Germany and Gaul, and it is believed even to Greece and the East. This corrupt form of the patriarchal faith withstood the progress of the Christian religion, which is the true form of that faith; and there is no saying how powerful a barrier it might have presented in the way of the truth, had not God, in His wrath and mercy, almost rooted it out by one single blow. This preparation for the Christian faith, by a condign punishment upon the idols and the idol priests, took place about forty years after the resurrection of our Lord, and was accomplished by the instrumentality of the Roman governor and his legions, who drove the Druids before him into the island of Anglesea, their sanctuary and high place; and

there, as Jehu did of old by the priests of Baal, he slew them without distinction of sex or age, hewed down their groves, and sacrificed the priests upon their own altars. In this stern act of vengeance the hand of the Lord is the more to be discerned, when we remember that the Romans made it an invariable rule to patronise all religions, and adopt into their Pantheon, or temple of all gods, every idol which had any name amongst the conquered nations. But the Druids being of an elder and deeper stock, and holding their religion from an age anterior to the worship of God in houses and by images, set at naught such patronage, and would not yield their empire of knowledge and superstition to the arms of Rome, and by their stern resistance brought upon themselves swift destruction.

This removed out of the way the chief opposition with which the Christian faith would have had to struggle; and though we find relics of the Druid family in Scotland for many centuries after, they existed without a head, and had no power to present any effectual opposition. The same grace did not God shew to any other land at so early a period; no, not for two centuries after this was paganism suppressed in the other parts of the Roman empire by the hand of the emperor Theodosius; and to this cause I do mainly attribute the easy plantation and early establishment of the Christian faith among our fathers. Druidism and Judaism fell together, almost in one year; and perhaps when God saw it good to remove His Church from her ancient seat in Judea, He thus prepared for her a refuge amongst the Britons, "divided from the rest of the world." Certain it is, as we shall see in the sequel, that this island hath ever since been, what still she is, the bulwark of the Christian faith. "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name be the glory."

The second cause which principally conduced to the early settlement of the Christian faith amongst us, was the blessed exemption which we enjoyed from the severities of the first nine general persecutions. From the time of Nero, before whom Paul twice appeared for the testimony of Jesus, till the time of Dioclesian, a period of nearly two centuries and a

half, every other part of the Roman empire was nine times by imperial edict searched, as with candles, for Christians to destroy them; but this the land of our fathers was left unmolested, to propagate and enjoy the faith, and to open her arms as a refuge of the faithful, who were permitted, nay, commanded by the Lord, "when persecuted in one city to flee unto another." And when at length, in the days of Dioclesian, the sword of persecution visited the Roman province of Britain, and made havoc of the churches there, our unsubjugated Caledonia opened her arms, and welcomed the holy men who fled to her for their lives. For it is a noble distinction which Scotland hath amongst the nations of the earth, that, come from what quarter they would, honest and humble Christian ministers have been ever received with open arms; while haughty men, who would lord it over God's heritage, have ever been resisted and cast out. When the tenth and severest persecution arose, our fathers reaped the reward of their valiant and noble stand for national independency, by receiving amongst them the most distinguished of the Christian confessors and Christian ministers of Britain; by whose piety and learning the cause of the Church, planted about a century before, was greatly promoted amongst us. To this event our best historians refer the origin of the name Culdees, given to the primitive ministers of the Scottish Church; which, according to the best explanation of the word, doth signify either the servants of God, or the men who worshipped in lonely cells or chapels, as these faithful witnesses who fled from the sword of persecution were wont to do. Some, however, are inclined to think, that this name was not appropriated by our Church till the time of Columba, nearly two centuries onward, who came over from Ireland with twelve co-presbyters, and estalished in Iona a monastic institution for learning and religion; whence, as from a fruitful mother, Scotland was planted with many such holy families, preserving the same name and following the same rule, and, in spite of Papal oppression, continuing to survive almost till the dawn of the Reformation; so that, however little acknowledged, it may with perfect safety be asserted, that Scotland since the second century hath not wanted a primitive apostol-

ical Church, and an orthodox faith, over which the Papacy came like an eclipse that soon passed away.

The third reason to which we impute the rapid progress and easy establishment of the Christian Church in this island, is God's good preservation of the British Churches from those numerous and frightful heresies, which during this period disfigured the beauty and exhausted the strength of Christians in other parts. And this is the more remarkable, as our fathers derived their knowledge of the gospel from the disciples of St John, and in all controversies leaned to the Greek Church, the fruitful parent of all those monstrous opinions. But haply, from having harder work on hand, and full occupation in defending their independence as a people, they were prevented from falling into those subtleties of thought which led the Eastern Church astray; and afterwards when the monastic institutions of the Culdees might have nourished the same spirit of refinement, they were directed into the more excellent way of charity, impelling them to go forth into all lands and preach the gospel to every creature under heaven. Certain it is, however, that the Gnostic heresies, which corrupted the simplicity of the truth with the mixtures of the Eastern philosophy, falsely so called, concerning the origin of evil and the creation of the world, which denied the reality of Christ's body and the truth of His sufferings; the Ebionite heresies, which added to the gospel the ceremonies of Moses and the traditions of the elders; the Manichean heresies, which represented the God of the Old Testament as different from the God of the New, and subverted the authority of all Scripture; and the Montanist heresy, or schism, which patronised an ignorant clergy, and introduced will-worship and bodily exercises; all these forms of error, by which Satan perplexed the path and exhausted the strength of the faithful in other parts of Christendom, were wholly unknown in Britain, where the Church was preserved in the unity of the faith, and permitted with unbroken strength to extend itself amongst the body of the people. Not until the fourth century did heresy shew its face amongst us under the forms of Arianism, which denies the divinity of our Lord; and Pelagianism, which corrupts the doctrine of salvation by free grace. When I reflect upon

these three great advantages, the suppression of idolatry, the freedom from persecution, and the preservation from heresy, which God bestowed upon the primitive churches in this island of Great Britain, my heart is filled with thankfulness and praise; and I perceive the signs of a special purpose of grace which God had towards us from the beginning, and which He hath continued with us until now, notwithstanding our many provocations. And I may add my conviction, that this special purpose of God's grace was to raise up a kingdom in the midst of the Roman empire; one amongst the ten into which it fell asunder; and to make it for a testimony and a barrier against that form of Papal superstition destined, under the name of Christianity, to obtain the dominion over all the rest; where, as upon a chosen eminence, He would erect the beautiful structure of a true Church, and exhibit the power and the blessedness, whereof it is the parent, unto every nation which will with wisdom and with strength maintain its ordinances against the deadly and destructive efforts of Antichrist.

The Christian verity having been thus established in our Scotland, by those into whose hands God hath committed that highest prerogative, nothing occurreth of any moment in the ancient traditions of our country until the reign of Fincomarcus, towards the end of the third century, in whose time the intestine wars between the Scotch and Picts being composed, and his own mind inclined to peace and good government, the Church of Christ in Scotland received no small strength and confirmation. For in his days the churches in South Britain began to be visited with that direful persecution of Dioclesian which afflicted the whole Roman world, with a violence unknown in any of the nine persecutions before it. Wherefore that time hath been distinguished from every other by the name of "the age of the martyrs." This trial of the Church was so sore, that, according to the venerable Bede, "the faithful Christians hid themselves in woods and deserts, and hidden caves, and the churches were laid level with the ground;" and "many of both sexes, in several places, having endured sundry torments, and their limbs torn, after an unheard-of manner, sent their souls by perfect combat to the joys of the heavenly city." Amongst

whom, for the martyr's name ought ever to be recorded, are mentioned Albanus, whose martyrdom gave name to the town of St Albans, and Aaron and Julius, citizens of Chester. The sorrow of the Church in the South was made joy to the Church in the North of Britain, where peace at this time prevailed, and a king reigned of a good disposition to the truth; who, according to our learned Buchanan, "being free of foreign cares, esteemed nothing better than to carry forward the Christian religion: for which an occasion arose, in that many Christians among the Britons fled to the Scots from the terror of Domitian's savage cruelty. Of these not a few, distinguished for their learning and integrity of life, took up their abode in Scotland, and led a solitary life, with such a universal esteem for sanctity, that the cells in which they had spent their lives were converted into churches; and from this the custom remained among the ancient Scots of calling churches cells, (Kilpatrick, Kilsyth, &c.) Monks of this kind were named Culdees; which appellation lasted until a more recent institute of monks, divided into several sects, expelled them, who were as much inferior to the Culdees in learning and piety, as they were superior to them in riches, ceremonies, and other external rites, which fascinate the eye and infatuate the minds of men. Fincomarcus having composed the state with the highest equity, and brought his subjects back to a gentler form of life, thereupon departed this life in the forty-seventh year of his reign," (A.D. 290–300.) Whether this be the true origin of the Culdees, or whether that event is to be postponed for more than two centuries, till the coming over of Columba, hath, as was said, been made a question, upon which one of our latest and most learned antiquarians hath thus delivered his opinion: "That whether the name and order existed before that time or not, there seems no good reason to doubt that the doctrines by which the religious of the Colomban order were distinguished had been held in North Britain long before;" and, for my own part, bearing in my mind the things which have been set forth above, I see no reason to doubt, but every reason to believe, the traditions of our earliest and best historians in this matter.

The establishment of the Christian religion in any country

is a work of great labour, especially amongst such a vexed people as our fathers were: and though the work began under such good auspices in the end of the second century, and received much confirmation in the acts recorded above, it wanted much of embracing the great body of the nation, and, indeed, may be hardly said to have yet obtained more than a seat. In consequence of the great overthrow which the Scots endured from Maximus, the Roman lieutenant, afterwards emperor, the ministers of religion were scattered abroad to various places of exile, along with the Scottish nation, who were in like manner dispersed. For at this time the Picts, both of the South and of the North of Scotland, were mostly in a state of paganism, from which they were converted, as we shall shew hereafter; the former by Ninian, and the latter by Columba. But soon rallying themselves, the suffering Church and kingdom found their support in Græmus, or Græme, a man of great valour, whose name and exploits are made famous in the designation *Græme's Dike*, by which the Roman wall between the two Friths of Forth and Clyde continued to be known after his time amongst the Scottish people. That fortification the Romans, before taking their departure from Britain, had repaired, and left as a bulwark against the inroads of the Picts and Scots, whom they sought to shut up amongst their mountains, while they retained all the low countries for the provincial Britons, their subjects and allies. But our fathers, being a very warlike people, and possessing in Græme a man of great valour and conduct, broke through the rampart once and again, from which time forth it received the name of Græme's Dike. This man, so valiant in the field, and possessing the guardianship of the kingdom for his nephew, yet a minor, did, after reconquering that part of Scotland between the wall we have mentioned, and another, which ran from the head of the Solway Frith to the mouth of the river Tyne, proceed to give a greater security and permanence to the monks and teachers of the Christian religion, for whom he appointed an annual income out of the fruits of the ground; which, saith the historian, "though slender, as being in those times, the moderation and temperance of the men considered as ample." It pleaseth me much to find our fathers in the Scottish Church

thus well reported of: may the same slender livings continue, through the same moral atmosphere, to appear ample! Such augmentations are cheap and blessed. Thus the second step towards the establishment of a Church was taken: the first gave it authority and patronage, by the king's submitting himself and his family to baptism; the second gave it provision and permanency, by appointing a first-fruits of the soil to be devoted to its support. It is not generally known, that to the same Græme, who was God's instrument to trample upon the Roman fortifications, we owe this second great act towards an ecclesiastical establishment in our country.

From this time, being the beginning of the fifth century, nothing is recorded in our ecclesiastical affairs till after the accession of Eugenius; by whom, in the year 431, the important step was taken of soliciting help from the bishop of Rome against the heresy of Pelagius. But before entering upon this, it will be necessary to make honourable mention of an apostolical man who laboured much, and with a great blessing, amongst our countrymen, before the heresy of Pelagius arose. This is St Ninian, a native of Britain, of noble family, who, having received a good education, travelled to Rome, which still remained the chief seat of learning in the West, as Alexandria was in the East. He perfected himself there in all the knowledge needful for the work on which his soul was bent; and, returning thence, he devoted himself to the work of an apostle amongst the southern Scotch and Picts, who dwelt between the Roman walls, having been repossessed of that region by the valour of Græme, as is set forth above. He founded the monastery, or seat of piety and learning, called *Candida-Casa;* in the vulgar language, Whitehouse; being the same, it is believed, with Whithorn, in Galloway. This foundation, to which the date of 413 is given, became one of the most famous nurseries of religion and learning in these parts. From which seat of piety and learning and industry the good St Ninian went forth amongst the people around, and was eminently successful in converting them to the faith. I know not whether this venerable churchman hath received commemoration in the name of the parish of St Ninians, but certain it is his name brought an odour of sanctity

to his monastery for many ages after his death. Concerning this apostolical man Bede thus writes: "For the southern Picts, who dwell on this side of these (Grampian) mountains, had long before, as is reported, forsaken the errors of idolatry, and embraced the faith of truth, by the preaching of Nynias, a most reverend man, and a most holy bishop of the British nation, who had been regularly educated at Rome in the faith and mysteries of truth." Whether he came into contact with the Pelagian heresy or not, is nowhere said; but most likely not, for the Pelagian heresy was not condemned till the Council of Carthage, in the year 415, whereas the date of St Ninian's labour is given as 412. Now, it is not to be believed that Pelagius returned into his native Scotland till he was driven from the heart of the field by Jerome and Augustine, whom he early knew as intimate friends, and afterwards as most determined antagonists. If we suppose him to have returned immediately hereupon to Britain, and to have begun to propagate his errors in Scotland, we have full fifteen years from the date of Ninian's work to that of the mission of Palladius; during which, it is to be believed, that Pelagius and Celestius made no small progress, aided as they were by all the learning and accomplishment of the Alexandrian school.

It is a remarkable feature in the history of the Church, that from Britain to Thrace, every one of the nations which were used by God as His scourge against idolatrous Rome, took on about the same time some heretical form of the truth;—the Franks, the Vandals, the Goths, and Visigoths, who overran Gaul, Spain, Italy, and Africa, being infected with Arianism, the Scots and Picts with Pelagianism. These heresies have their origin in the carnal mind, which will insist upon satisfaction in knowledge before belief: whereas there can be no true knowledge otherwise than through faith; as it is written, "add to your faith knowledge." Among the Roman nations it was quite otherwise: for with them the faith was corrupted through the sense, which always desireth an ostensible and visible form of every truth. The symbolical and the ritual parts of religion amongst them prevailed to overcloud the truth; whereas amongst the northern nations the subtle speculations of the intellect made it void. This be-

speaks a very characteristic difference between the cast of mind and disposition of the Latin and the Gothic nations. After Arianism had struggled about three hundred years for the supremacy, it was put down by the heavy oppression of the Papacy: but wherever that weight has been removed by the Reformation, the old character of the Gothic nations appeareth, as is to be witnessed at this day in the foreign Protestant Churches, which are overwhelmed with Arianism in its basest form; and in the British Churches, which are overrun with Pelagianism, or, as they call it, Arminianism; and truly the tenets of the dominant parties, both in the Churches of Scotland and England, at this day, is the Pelagian doctrine of merit. It is very curious to observe how a nation, as an individual, when converted to the gospel, is not changed in its substantial character, but only overruled by the power of God, which being withdrawn, the old man appears in his proper features, as clear and distinct as ever. But it is now time that we give some account of Pelagius and his heresy.

Pelagius, a native Briton, if not a Scotchman, (as I think,) was born in the year 354, the same day and the same year with Augustine, his great opponent: and his disciple and friend Celestius was certainly a Scotchman. These heretics, before they left their own country, had made great progress in their studies; and being both of them very learned men, it proves that towards the middle of the third century, and before it, there must have been in Scotland both men and schools of Christian learning, according to the account given above by Buchanan. In the canons of the African code (can. 108-116) his opinions are anathematised as follows:—(1.) He held that Adam was by nature mortal, so that he must have died whether he had sinned or not. (2.) He denied original sin, and that infants are baptized for the remission of sin. (3.) He denied that justifying grace strengthens men against sin. (4.) He denied the necessity of grace in order to obedience. (5.) He said, that it is in humility, not in reality, that *we ought to say, we have no sin.* (6.) He said, that saints say for others, not for themselves, *Forgive us our trespasses.* (7.) Or say it in humility, not in truth. These most heterodox doctrines he and his disciples succeeded in disseminating in

Scotland, helped on by the happy ignorance and entire separation in which that Church lived towards Rome; also by the great learning, severe self-denial, and sound ecclesiastical views of their authors, who boldly withstood the encroachments of bishops, and their ambition to become prelates: and I think I discern a third reason, in the subtle character of the Scottish intellect, which even then delighted to lose itself in abstract questions concerning the freedom of the will and the decrees of God. To me it is apparent that these errors could only originate and grow amongst a people of a metaphysical turn of mind, and of sequestered habits of life: when they began to be published in the Church of the South Britons by Agricola and Julianus, the British clergy would not receive them; but yet could not reply to them, being more inclined to visible symbols of truth, and less to abstract conceptions. It is curious to perceive the strong and striking characteristics of the Scotch and English people, of the Scotch and English churches, thus early revealing themselves. Before passing on to consider the effectual remedies which were applied to this disease in Scotland, and the great results to learning and piety which arose out of it, I cannot omit one remark with respect to heresy in general: that, though the origin of it be doubtless in the unbelieving heart and depraved mind of man, it is not permitted to enter into the Church without a very evil occasion and for a very good end. The occasion is gross ignorance, into which, when the Church falleth, heresies or errors of knowledge are the inevitable consequence and needful cure. Heresy is an accommodation of truth to that ignorance, and therefore doth at first catch like an infection; the ignorance being at once its occasion and its sustenance, as the filth of foul houses and the exhalation of putrid marshes are the occasion and continuance of fever and pestilence. The end of permitting the heresy to arise is to clear away the pestilent ignorance in which it was bred, and to bring out the truth still more beautiful and complete: and as an Arius brought forth an Athanasius in the Church, and a Pelagius brought forth an Augustine, so will a heresiarch always bring forth a mighty champion of the faith. In the works of Augustine are contained confessedly by far the most perfect demonstration of those doc-

trines of grace which Luther, taught and sustained in no small degree by Augustine, preached abroad; and for the revival of which we need, I think, in our times, both the pen of an Augustine and the trumpet-voice of a Luther.

To withstand the progress of the Pelagian and Celestian heresy, the instrument whom God employed was Palladius, who had already commended himself to the work by the pains which he took to persuade Pope Celestine to send Germanus and Lupus, two bishops of the Gallican Church, into the southern parts of Britain, in order to stay the progress of Pelagianism there. He was then a deacon; and a short while afterwards received from the same Celestine a commission to proceed to the Scots who believe in Christ. Some would have it that this commission was to the Scotch people in Ireland, and not to the Scots who, in conjunction with the Picts, possessed the northern parts of Britain. But there is little reason to doubt, both from the language of Prosper of Aquitaine, a contemporary, and of Bede who follows him, that it was to the Scots of Britain, our fathers, that Palladius was sent; and not to the Scots of Ireland, who were afterwards brought to the true faith by our countryman Patricius, commonly styled St Patrick. The words of Prosper I shall quote, not for the sake of the controversy, but for the end of information:—"Pope Celestine was not less diligent in delivering Britain from the same infectious doctrines, when he banished from their country some enemies of the faith, appointed a bishop in Scotland, and not only endeavoured to preserve in the Roman island the exercise of the Catholic religion, but also converted a barbarous country to Christianity." This Celestine was an orthodox, but an ambitious pope: orthodox in that he resisted both the Pelagian heresy, which invalidates grace and redemption, and the Nestorian heresy, which attaineth the same evil end by asserting two persons to be in Christ, instead of two natures in one person;—ambitious in that he contended with the African bishops concerning the right of appealing from them to the bishop of Rome, a point which containeth in it the assumption of entire supremacy. In the exercise of this zeal for the orthodox faith and the Roman supremacy, I doubt not that he sent Palladius into Scotland; which till

then had never acknowledged, and for six centuries thereafter would never acknowledge any superiority whatever, much less supremacy, to be in the bishop of Rome. Eugenius, our king, being then in the tenth year of his reign, over whom Græme had been tutor, did, with a good disposition to the well-being of his subjects and the prosperity of the gospel, grant without price to Palladius, and the great company of clergy which was with him, a place to dwell wherever they chose to ask. When, in our old writers, it is said that Palladius came with a great accompaniment of clergy, it is to be understood of elders and deacons and other inferior persons; who, in the language of those times, were called clergy; nothing being so common in the canons of the Church as the expression, "bishop, presbyters, and deacons, and other clergy." In one of the manuscripts of the Scottish chronicle of Fordon, it is added that he made choice of Fordoun in the Mearns; which also answers well to the traditions and relics of him still surviving there.

There can be little doubt, from the many footsteps of the same event in our Scottish records, that whether Palladius's mission might have included the Irish Scots or not, he certainly laboured amongst the Caledonian Scots, or rather Picts, who dwelt chiefly in that eastern side of the island. With what success his mission was attended during his own lifetime we have nothing but loose accounts, such as that given by Prosper above; but that it did not prevail to the extirpation of the Pelagian heresy, is too manifest from the letter which Pope John III. wrote to the Scots in the year 639, two centuries after the mission of Palladius, wherein he thus expresseth himself:—"And we have also understood that the poison of the Pelagian heresy again springs up among you: we therefore exhort you that you put from your thoughts all such venomous, superstitious wickedness. For you cannot be ignorant how that execrable heresy has been condemned; for it has not only been abolished for two hundred years past, but it is also daily by us buried in perpetual anathema; and we exhort you, that you do not rake up the ashes of those whose weapons you know are burnt. For who will not detest their insolence and impious proposition, who say, That man can live without sin of his own free

will, and not through God's grace? And, in the first place, it is the folly of blasphemy to say, That man is without sin; which no man can be, but only the Mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who was conceived and born without sin; for all other men, being born in original sin, are known to bear the testimony of Adam's prevarication, even whilst they are without actual sin, according to the saying of the prophet, For behold I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me."—This passage of the letter of Pope John, which expresseth well both the heresy of Pelagianism and its refutation, proveth that, however the labours of Palladius at that time might have prevailed to lop the branches, the root of it still remained in the soil of the Scottish Church; where, as I have said, it is at this day the form which the hatred of the truth continues to assume. But certainly as a Church we are much beholden to Pope Celestine for this timeous help; and though it brought along with it some of the seeds of Romanism, we are thankful that they did not take root amongst us; or rather, I should say, God by other eminent servants, and especially by Columba, counteracted the evil of Prelatical and Papal supremacy, which Palladius brought along with him, and of which it is said by Buchanan he introduced the beginnings.

It is a subject of great gratitude to those who know and reverence the place of kings, as the chief magistrates and lieutenants of Christ, to perceive that those heresies which were permitted to occupy the throne both in the East and West and the Gothic kingdoms, never received any such sanction in Scotland; where not only did Eugenius graciously receive and royally entertain and settle Palladius and his great company, but likewise his successor Dungardus, who inherited the wisdom of his father, and of whose services in the cause of the Church Buchanan thus writes: "His mind being delivered from this fear, gave itself wholly to the care of God's worship. For the churches were still troubled with the relics of the Pelagian heresy; for the refutation of which, in the reign of Eugenius, Celestine, the Roman pontiff, had sent over Palladius, by whom very many, being grounded in learning and pious living, grew to be famous; especially

Patricius, Servanus, Ninianus, and Kentegernus. This same Palladius is believed to have been the first to create bishops in Scotland: for up to this time the churches were governed by monks without any bishops; with less ceremony and pomp indeed, but with greater simplicity and sacredness. The Scots, intent upon the care of purifying their ecclesiastical matters, and cultivating their mind, escaped," &c. It will be sufficient to explain for the present, that by the bishops, here truly represented as a novelty in Scotland, are meant prelates, who then began to assume authority over many altars and parishes; an evil which to this day is to be lamented in many churches, which had no existence in the primitive Church; but is expressly prohibited in the 24th canon of the code of the primitive Church, commonly called the Apostolical Canons: "If any priest [presbyter or elder] despising his bishop, gather a separate congregation and erect another altar, being not able to convict his bishop of anything contrary to godliness and righteousness, let him be deposed as one that affects dominion, for he is an usurper; as also the clergymen [as explained above] that are his accessaries; and let the laymen be suspended from communion. Let these [censures] be passed after a first, second, and third admonition from the bishop." Now, the order which Palladius introduced amongst us, was an order of men who should have authority over many altars and congregations. For as to a bishop in the New-Testament sense, or "an elder who ruleth in the word and doctrine, and is therefore worthy of double honour," there were such in every church in Scotland as there are now. But of prelates there were none, and are none, and ought never and nowhere to be any. Thus was the Pelagian heresy brought under for the present; and though it had a certain root two hundred years after, as it will ever have either overtly or covertly in every church, it certainly never again shewed any head or strength, or disposition to propagate itself in the kingdom of Scotland, until the rise and progress of the Moderate party in the Church during the last century, of whose preaching it may safely be said that the chief ingredient was Pelagianism. There is this difference in our times, that the leaven worketh all

unseen; it hath joined hypocrisy to heresy; it subsisteth in concert with an orthodox confession of faith: but my conviction is, that it prevails at the present day in the Church to a far greater extent than it ever did before.

We now come to make mention of one whose name cannot be held in too high esteem. We mean Columba, a man of royal descent; who, with twelve co-presbyters, his kindred and friends, passed over from Ireland in their wicker boats covered with hides, about the year 563, and settled in Iona, an island contiguous to Mull, which was bestowed upon him by Conal, king of the Western or Dalriad Scots. He was a man of great sanctity of manners, and of high authority even in the courts of kings, insomuch that they referred their quarrels to his arbitration. Aidan, who afterwards became king of the Western Scots, was not satisfied with his title until he had received unction from Columba; and before he engaged in battle, he was accustomed to seek the prayers of the elders of Iona; and, as might be expected, he grew to be the greatest conqueror of his time, and wrought out great privileges for his people. Columba was also a man of a large and charitable heart; and in the great council of Drumcea in Ulster, he was the apologist of the Irish bards, who, by their flatteries, had drawn down on them the wrath of their king; and he there also maintained the liberties of his country. Columba is said to have founded a hundred monasteries, and some extend the number even to three hundred, including the churches; he administered unction to kings; and in the great council above referred to, he appeared as the representative of the clergy of North Britain; and there are at least twenty churches still existing, or upon record, which are called by his name. His life was written by two of his successors, Cumin and Adamnan; and in these latter times by the Rev. Dr Smith. Our object in this sketch is to be brief, though comprehensive; and therefore we shall not trouble ourselves to speak of this eminent saint, to whom, perhaps, the Church of Christ owes more than to any single man who has lived since the days of the apostles; and to whom Scotland certainly owes a debt which she can never repay; and England also, whereof the north and central parts were converted by those

who followed in his footsteps: yea, and foreign parts of the world also.

We should form an idea the most remote from the truth, if we were to suppose that the monasteries of the Culdees, which he established, had any resemblance whatever to those monkish institutions which in after-times prevailed over Christendom. In nothing do they agree but in this, that in both they lived together according to a rule, but, unlike the other monastic institutions which even in the fifth century had become proverbial for their licentiousness, the Culdee monasteries continued, till within three centuries of the Reformation, distinguished for their piety, simplicity, purity, and zeal for religion. The reason of this difference is to be found in many things; and chiefly in this, that from the beginning, and for several generations, they steadily resisted all commerce with Rome, and proved themselves, even so late as the thirteenth century, steady opponents to the Prelatic invasions of that apostate Church. Aidan, who converted the Northumbrians and the Angles to the Christian faith, would never conform to the Roman customs, and yet was held in reverence by his opponents. Colman, one of the disciples of Columba, resigned the bishopric of Lindisfarn, in Northumberland, rather than submit to the Papal traditions and rites. The famous Alcuin, the preceptor and religious adviser of Charlemagne, in his letter "to the most learned men and fathers in the province of the Scots," bears testimony that none of the laity confessed to the priests; shewing that auricular confession had no place amongst them: yet beareth he testimony to the wisdom and piety and holy living of the monks, and to the religious conversation of the laity, and their most chaste lives. St Bernard, in his life of Malachi, who went to Armagh in the twelfth century, speaks of the Christian people there as most barbarous and savage, for their rejection of auricular confession, authoritative absolution, the sacrament of confirmation, and other Papal inventions. Now, the Irish, especially in the North, were almost entirely taught by the Culdees. They baptized in any water they came to, without respect to consecrated chrism. One of their bishops, Sedulius, whether of Scotland or Ireland matters little, but certainly of one or the

other, seeing he subscribes himself a bishop of Britain, of the nation of the Scots, in a commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, when treating of these words, "Do this in remembrance of me," hath no allusion whatever to the doctrine of transubstantiation, but speaks in a manner which any Protestant might subscribe to. They dedicated their churches to the Holy Trinity, and not to the blessed Virgin or any saint: and without entering into further particulars, we conclude by observing, that to the minutest matter, as the rite of the tonsure, which yet in those days was esteemed very important by the Romanists, they resisted until the eighth century. This same spirit continued amongst them, in a greater or lesser degree, until the extinction of the order; and to this their preference of primitive customs over Papal innovations, I refer, in a great measure, the blessings of holiness amongst themselves, and of prosperity to the Church of Christ, whereof this order was the instrument. Among other things in which they resisted the innovations of the Church of Rome, and differed from all monastic institutions whatever, was their rejection of celibacy and their honour of God's ordinance of marriage. They lived together with their wives and children in their monastic establishment; nor was it until a late period in the history of the order, that their wives and children lived in houses apart. Nay, in such esteem was this sacred relation, that not unfrequently son succeeded to father in their holy ministries. Unlike the Papal institutions, when they died their property was divided amongst their wives and children, and nearest relatives, and went not to aggrandise the order. Moreover, there was no superstition attached to the rule itself, as if there was religious merit in the observation thereof. They merely conformed to it as a thing most convenient for the ends of brotherhood, and piety, and learning, and religious duties. These religious societies consisted partly of clergy and partly of laity. There were twelve elders, or presbyters, or priests, and over them an abbot or superior, who likewise was no more than an elder, presbyter, or priest: and as one died, they elected another in his room. These men devoted themselves exclusively to the service of God and of religion, in the various ministries of the Church. They followed after

learning with great diligence, and employed themselves much in transcribing the Holy Scriptures, in fasting, and in prayer. They went forth from the monasteries, and preached the gospel to the people in the neighbouring country. They administered unto them the sacraments and consolations of religion. They composed their quarrels; they blessed their families; they received the gifts of the rich and dispensed them amongst the poor. They rebuked wickedness; they withstood violence; they healed breaches; they composed wars: in one word, the life of Columba, the life of Aidan, and, in general, the lives of all the Culdees, which are on record, are above all praise. They are the nearest to the lives of the Lord and His apostles which I have either read or heard of in any language or in any country: and what is remarkable, I know not an instance recorded of impurity, treachery, arrogance, or self-seeking, amongst these followers of the Lamb. While thus the clerical part of the household went about the services of God in the proper way, of study, meditation, prayer, preaching, and transcribing the sacred volume, the lay members of the fraternity employed themselves in cultivating the land, and raising food for the community and the poor; in practising the arts of life, and bringing them to perfection; and in propagating useful inventions amongst the people; so that, while upon the one hand these Culdee establishments were the centres of evangelical truth, from which the preaching of it went forth, they were also the centres of civilisation, from which the well-being of the present life went likewise forth. They ministered that godliness in its full measure, which hath the promise both of the life which now is, and of the life which is to come. In what other light, therefore, may we regard these institutions, than as houses which wisdom built for her own habitation, in times when the world was rude and unaccustomed to the rights of man, and the restraints of law. Here religion retired, not to dwell alone and become stagnant and corrupt, but to protect and reinforce herself with studies and devotions, that she might go forth with renewed faith, and tame the fierce passions of mankind.

Our fathers of the Scottish nation were a mighty and a valiant people, who dwelt in the face of all their enemies, nor

were afraid to encounter the might of them all. God hath put within the people of Scotland an indomitable spirit, which will not be enforced by the power of man. Our fathers may be said to have lived for centuries in the tented field; yea, and to have slept by night with their arms in their hands; and had they not been of such a temper, long ere this the name of Scotland would have been lost among the nations. Romans, Saxons, Danes, and Normans, and, above all, our sister England, unsurpassed in arms, would have annihilated the Scottish Church and State, had it not been for that patience and perseverance, in asserting their rights and liberties, which, beyond all nations in the world, the Scottish people have manifested; and for their endurance they have been rewarded with no second place amongst the nations of the earth.

These trophies of our nation are not to be attributed to her mountains, and marshes, and other natural defences, but to the spirit of valour, and of endurance, and of single-handed adventure, with which God hath endued the people for great ends of His providence; and for this, among the rest, the end of preserving the primitive forms of His Church against all the innovations of Papal Rome. Now, amongst such a people where the comparatively modern division of the land into parishes, and the settlement of parish churches, with their several pastors under their several presbyteries, was utterly impracticable; what method was there left but this, which the Culdees adopted, of planting the land far and near with these sanctuaries of religion, learning, and civilisation; wherein might be reared up a learned and holy order of men, to fill the offices of the Church and of the State; also to administer law and equity amongst the people; whither the poor might resort in time of need; where the charities of life might dwell; whence the prayers and intercessions needful for a wicked land, might ever ascend to God; and from which the preachers of glad tidings might go forth over the world? Ah me! I could almost wish myself transported back to Iona; and living, amongst the presbyters of Columba, their life of piety and love.

At the time when this institution appeared amongst us, for

no less an end, I believe, than the preservation of the pure faith of Christ, our land, having recovered from its wrestling with the power of Rome, had begun to act offensively against the southern parts of Britain, now deserted by the Romans, and visited with poverty and pusillanimity of spirit, through the corruption and licentiousness which had crept into all classes, and especially through the ignorance and want of learning which prevailed in the Church. To meet these the stern reprisals of our fathers, the British people, instead of looking unto God, joined league with the idolatrous nations of Germany; and introduced into their country not only a new oppression but a fresh superstition; and the remnants of the British Church were forced to take refuge in the mountains of Wales. Then began a series of bloody wars between the Saxons and the Scotch, waged with various success; through means of which fierce conflict God propagated, by the Culdees, the Christian faith amongst the idolaters. Oswald, a prince of the Angles, having during his exile received baptism and Christian education amongst the Culdees, when he was restored to his kingdom, sent to the island of Iona for a bishop, (*antistes*, overseer,) by whose teaching and ministry "the nation of the Angles which he governed might learn both the benefits of the faith of our Lord, and receive His sacraments." The presbyters or elders sent Colmar from amongst their number, devoting him to this object by the laying on of their hands; "who having, through the severity of his nature, ill succeeded, returned into his country; and in the assembly of the elders he made relation, how that in teaching he could do the people no good to the which he was sent, forasmuch as they were folks that might not be reclaimed, of hard capacity and fierce nature. Then the elders, as they say, began to treat at length what were best to be done." Whereupon Aidan having spoken his fears that his brother had proceeded with overmuch haste and severity, it is written by the same venerable Bede, "that the eyes and ears of all who sat together in council being turned upon himself, they did diligently discuss the thing which he had said; and decree that he himself was worthy of the episcopate, and was the man who ought to be sent to teach the un-

believing and unlearned people, as being a man proved to be before all things imbued with the grace of discretion, which is the mother of virtues; and so they ordained him, and sent him to preach the gospel." And by this same Aidan, a missionary worthy to stand by the side of an apostle, was the nation of the Angles [the English] converted to the Christian faith. King Oswald himself deeming it nothing beneath his dignity, nor beside his royal calling, to act as his interpreter, which he was able to do, having been reared among the Scots.

From this time, the same venerable author relates, that many of the Scots began daily to come into the provinces of England, and with great devotion to preach the gospel, and such of them as had received the degree of priesthood administered the sacraments. I need not point out, as I proceed, how exactly the Culdee discipline accords with the discipline of the Scottish Church unto this day; according to which, any one may preach who hath submitted his gifts to the inspection of the eldership; but those only may administer the sacraments who are thereto ordained by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. Bede is not ashamed to say, "The English, great and small, were by their Scottish masters instructed in the rules and observances of regular discipline."

This is only one instance amongst many of the diligence and success with which the Culdees laboured in the propagation of the gospel in foreign parts. It is mentioned in one of the histories of Columba, that Cormuc, one of the presbyters of Iona, being minded to go to some islands in the northern main, where he might plant the truth as it is in Jesus, was brought by the providence of God to the Orkney Islands, and there by his faithfulness converted the people. Two things connected with this mission beautifully illustrate the character of the Culdee priests. After the missionary had proceeded on his perilous way in his lonely wicker-boat, there arose a great tempest, directly in the face of his course; whereupon Columba said unto his monks, "Come, let us hasten unto the Church and pray for our brother, that the Lord would preserve him and speed him on his way;" and

praying in faith they had soon the answer of their prayer granted to them. Columba, about the same time, happening to be at the court of Brudius, king of the Picts, met there a prince from the Islands of Orkney, who, being much taken with the sanctity and wisdom of the aged man, besought how in any way he might do him a grace; whereupon Columba said, "When thou returnest to Orkney, if thou shouldest hear of our brother now on his way thither, give him thy countenance and help." This same prince afterwards saved the Culdee missionary's life; and was the means of helping forward the work of the Lord in those parts. The number of Culdee settlements along the Western Islands, shew how diligent they were to plant the waste parts of the earth with the tree of life. Their numerous establishments throughout the mainland of Scotland, shew how diligent they were to give to the Church already in existence the advantage of learning and permanence, which the monastic institution, when thus constructed, did certainly confer.

I count it good, in this place, to make relation in a few words of the services which my native country and my mother Church have been honoured to render, from the earliest times of their own conversion, to the cause of the propagation of the gospel in foreign parts; and this I do with the more willingness, because in these days they seem to be forgotten in the events of the Reformation, and the noise and bustle of the money missions which characterise our times. Nor will I be nice in deciding whether the persons whom I am about to name were of the Scots of Ireland or Caledonia, seeing their religious institutions were nearly or entirely the same. What I aim at is, to shew forth the true spirit of apostolic zeal to propagate the gospel with which the fathers of the Scottish Church, who resisted both Papacy and Prelacy, were informed. Before the age of Columba, not only had Pelagius and Celestius, but many others, as St Cœtalidus and St Fridoline, travelled into foreign parts, and settled there with great odour and sanctity, which lives to this day in the monasteries dedicated to the latter somewhere on the Rhine. I speak not of the labours of the royal Constantine of Cornwall, and of Kiernan, because they laboured chiefly upon the Clyde,

and in Kintyre, and other regions of Scotland itself. We have already mentioned Sedulius; and we may add to him St Triobelline, who cultivated learning and established schools and monasteries for religion in Germany and France, at a time when these nations were yet unconverted pagans. Columbanus, nearly contemporary with Columba, and sometimes confounded with him, went forth with twelve companions and founded the abbey of Luxeville in Burgundy; whence, after twenty years, being exiled by the persecution of Queen Bonnechilde, he went forth and preached the word to the Boii, the Franks, and other nations of Germany; and after labouring amongst the inhabitants of Switzerland, he at last settled in Lombardy, and there he founded the abbey of Bolio, where he died in the year 615. 'From his writings concerning the keeping of Easter, against the Romanists, he seems to have been a man of no mean science for those times, as well as of apostolic zeal in preaching the gospel, and likewise of skill in the orthodox faith, which he defended against Arius in a work now lost. Amongst the companions of Columbanus was St Giles, who was instrumental in converting many thousands in Switzerland to the Christian faith. Yet so strict was he to the forms of his Church, that he refused the bishopric, or prelacy, of Constance. Contemporary with him was Jonas, who made great proficiency in theological learning, and wrote the lives of many of the saints of those days, and amongst others of Columbanus, in the number of whose companions also they reckon St Gall, who published the gospel amongst the Helvetii and the Suevi. That same spirit of the Culdees which spread the gospel over Scotland and Ireland, and the northern parts of England, extended itself into foreign parts with the same purity and zeal, and was mainly instrumental in converting the heathen nations. Some also amongst them, though few, as St Chilian, fell away to the Roman Church; and some, both at home and abroad, addicted themselves to solitary devotion, though the great body of these learned and apostolical men gave themselves, like Columba and Columbanus, to plant religious houses, wherein learning and piety might have their refuge, and dispense their healing beams over the wilderness around.

I have not made much mention of St Kentigern, or Mungo, and his disciples, as the ascetic Balthere, nor of St Patrick, because their labours were chiefly in our native land. St Patrick was assisted in his conversion of Ireland by many natives of Caledonia, amongst whom are mentioned St Mael Gildus Albanus, the historian, and St Benigne, one of St Patrick's disciples. Though the events of these times be obscured and disfigured by the manner in which they have been reported to us, still there can be no doubt that God, during these ages, so dark in other parts of Christendom, was serving Himself with the labours of the uncorrupted Church established amongst our fathers.

I might be tempted in this place likewise to make an enumeration of the services which were rendered to learning by these the fathers of the Scottish Church, and successors of the apostles in the conversion of the heathen nations, who had such a reputation during the dark ages as to obtain for their country the name of "learned Scotland;" but this belongs not so much to my subject. One thing, however, is most worthy of notice, that the last effort on a large scale against the progress of Papal idolatry and darkness, in the time of Charlemagne, was made chiefly through the instrumentality of learned and pious Scotchmen entertained in the court of that prince. Though Alcuin was an Englishman, he belonged to those regions of Northumbria and Mercia which had been converted by the ministry of the Culdees, and received their primitive discipline; and Albin, who has sometimes been mistaken for him, was a Scotchman born, who wrote a treatise against image-worship at this time, favoured by the second Council of Nice. So also was Clement, who wrote on the same subject, and withstood Boniface, a great promoter of the Papal superstitions. By these, and other men, mostly of this island, a school of learning and of theology was established under that munificent monarch, which for several ages withstood, both by learning and by reasoning, and likewise by decrees, as in the Council of Frankfort, the Papistical spirit, and asserted the rights of private judgment against the authority of fathers and councils, with which the Church now began to be overwhelmed. In the train of these men arose others; such as

John Scotus Erigena, also of Culdee origin, and Samson, and John of Melrose, and Sedulius, and others, who maintained the conflict against the Papal see. How high was the reputation of our country in these times is well asserted by Muratori, in these words: "To Britain, Scotland, and Ireland, is due great praise for surpassing the other western nations in literary acquirements;" and with what zeal they went forth to bless other nations with their knowledge of philosophy, as well as of religion, is declared by Hericus, in the dedication to Charlemagne of one of his works: "Why speak I of Scotland? almost that whole nation, setting at naught the perils of the sea, resort to our country with a numerous train of philosophers," &c. Indeed, the services which they did to foreign parts, continue to be acknowledged to this day, in the foundations for Scotchmen which exist in many of the chief towns and university seats of Germany and France.

I mention these things, because they prove, beyond a question, that the Scottish Church, with its simple and primitive forms, did more to preserve the light of knowledge and the life of true religion over the world, during these dark ages, than all Christendom besides. Our fathers were possessed with that true missionary spirit which is the surest token of a true Church of Christ; and however much I admire the Reformation, I am forced to confess, that we look there in vain for any such generous efforts. In that glorious work our nation put forth its ancient magnanimity, and defied the efforts of Papacy and Prelacy to impose their inventions upon a primitive Church. Again I am forced to confess, that neither the apostolical spirit of propagating the gospel, nor the Culdee spirit of cultivating learning, hath yet arisen to any strength amongst us since the Reformation. I grieve to see the multitude of our preachers who, having little or no occupation at home, remain unmoved by the spirit of our fathers to carry the gospel into heathen parts. The reasons of this will better appear in the sequel of our discourse: but I cannot leave this glorious epoch of our ecclesiastical history without calling upon the youth of my native land, and mother Church, to be ashamed of the lethargy, and seek after the spirit of the ancient time.

PART II.

THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND WRESTLING AGAINST ANTICHRIST.

THERE is no greater mystery in the providence of God, than the permission in His Church of that spirit of Antichrist, which, beginning in the days of the apostles, went on until it made for itself a habitation and a name in the city of Rome, whence it went forth with an iron sceptre, to counteract and destroy the work which our Lord and His disciples had wrought over the earth: wherein God doth hold up to view the wickedness of Satan and of man, in darker colours than ever had been seen before. In the oppositions which were made to the preaching of the gospel, and the persecutions of the primitive Church, by an unbelieving world, was manifested the work and power of Satan in the natural heart of man, which, though made by Christ, would not acknowledge Him its maker; and though enlightened by that true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world, preferred the darkness to the light, and when the light shined the darkness comprehended it not: but in the mystery of iniquity, wrought up into the Papal system, the light which was in the Church was converted into darkness; the life which was in the Church was by violent hands of the Church herself put to death; the candle of the Lord was hidden under a bushel by those to whom He had entrusted it, and whom He had honoured to be its upholders, for the illumination of the world. The pagan opposition to the truth was the great proof given of the darkness and love of falsehood, which the father of lies hath engendered in the human heart; the Papal suppression of the truth was the manifestation of that positive hatred of God, and of godliness, and preference of the devil and wicked-

ness, which is wrought by Satan in the hearts of men; and both together complete the evidence and establish the proof of man's utter debasement under the dominion of Satan, his love of his bondage, and his inability to be helped out of it by any external advantages, by anything short of a new heart and a right spirit put within him. Let every mouth be stopped, let every tongue be silent, and let all the world become guilty before God, while beholding not only the kingdoms of the world, but likewise the ordinances of the Church, yea, and the very doctrines of the truth themselves, in the hands of men joining against God and His Anointed, saying, "Let us break asunder their bands, and cast their cords from us."

While thus, in the growth of the Papal superstition, the power of wickedness to transmute light into darkness, good into evil, was shewing itself, the Spirit of God was at the same time shewing His superior power, by enabling the poor things of this world, and the things that are despised, and the things that are not, to resist the coming on of darkness, and to shine as lights in the midst of the world: for God is great, and there is none able to withstand Him. The Father hath given unto Christ a seed, and none shall pluck them out of His hand. This is the very way whereby God proveth His being and His power, that in the midst of manifest resistance of all things, when they plunge, and rear, and foam against Him, He can, whenever He pleaseth, and He doth ever please, still the passionate storm, and make His creatures obey whatever His pleasure is. We, who are His, cannot make any separation betwixt ourselves and the common flesh and blood of mankind; in whose pagan opposition to light, and Papal destruction of light, we see that spirit which we are naturally of; and in our hatred of darkness and love of light, and transmutation of darkness into light, we come to know that it is not we, but God, who is more mighty than we, that hath translated us out of darkness into the kingdom of His dear Son: and thus all wickedness in the world enables all saints to give all glory unto God. Therefore is it most necessary, in order to shew that the devil had not taken the world all unto himself, that God should keep up a body of faithful witnesses, to whom He should give power to witness for Christ and the truth, against

the devil and the mother of lies, during all the period of her appointed regency in the realm of darkness. To point out, in a brief and cursory way, the resistance and protestation which was maintained in the realm of Scotland by the servants of the Lamb, until they got the victory in the Reformation, is the second object which we propose to ourselves in this Introductory Essay.

Palladius, as hath been said above, was the first man who came to our fathers from the see of Rome, and naturally introduced into our country the notions both of Prelacy and of Papacy, which, at that time, were both in being in the Latin Church; the one having existed for a good while, the other just coming into existence. The constitution of the primitive Church was equality of bishops, each appointed to minister word and ordinances to one, and only one, flock. When they met in council, it was necessary to appoint some one who should preside; and ofttimes this their president would be continued, for his life, and sometimes it would be claimed as the privilege of one, perhaps the mother Church of the province; but that there was no right in one minister of the word to rule over another, is a point of the last importance to maintain, for in it stands, and with it falls, the headship of Christ. Prelacy, however, stands in the denial of this; and when I speak of Prelacy, I mean that system of ecclesiastical policy which subordinateth one minister of the word unto another, one bishop of the Church unto another. A superintendent authority may be permitted, though dangerous, in such cases as prevent the ministers from meeting in presbytery; but a Prelatical authority, where one hath lordship over another, cannot for a moment be admitted. It would seem, from his appointing Servan to the Orkneys and Tervan to the Northern Picts, that Palladius brought with him, and sought to promote, the false system of diocesan Prelacy. But it took not with the nation; for in the next century, by the conjoint labours of Congal in the kingdom, and Columba in the Church, the ministers of religion were gathered together into cloisters or colleges, according to the rule laid down above; in which our scholars and antiquaries have made it to appear, beyond a doubt, that there was no such thing as supe-

riority of one above another, except that which choice conferred for the sake of order and discipline. From the time of Palladius there was no communication with Rome until the time of Augustine the monk, who came over to England from Gregory the Great, in the year 600, to claim and take possession of the island in his name, a usurpation which was resisted by the British Church with one consent, and with circumstances of great indignation. His successor Laurentius, claiming to be archbishop of Britain in his room, followed up his ambition by a letter to the Scottish Church in Ireland, which, as we have said, was one in government and often in name with the Church in Scotland, in which he was joined by two of his ambitious coadjutors, Melitus and Justus. "To our most dear lords, our brother bishops and abbots over all Scotland, Laurentius, Melitus, and Justus, bishops, servants of the servants of God. When the apostolical see, as its custom is over all the world, did direct us to preach to the pagan nations in these western parts, and we happened to come into this island which is named Britain, believing that they walked according to the custom of the universal Church, we, in our ignorance, held both the Britons and the Scots in the greatest veneration for their sanctity. But, upon knowing the Britons, we had thought the Scots to be better than they, until, by Dagamus, a bishop, who is come hither, and Columbanus, an abbot among the Gauls, we have learned that they differ nothing from the Britons in their walk and conversation; for Dagamus the bishop, upon coming to us, not only would not break bread with us, but not even partake of it in the same inn where we lived." This letter speaks volumes with respect to the antipathy which there was between the Scottish presbyters or bishops, and these bishops of the Antichristian school. I can well understand the indignation which moved the Scottish Culdee presbyter when he entered the presence of the successors of Augustine, who came into Britain with all the pomp and arrogance of a Papal legate, and carried himself towards the British Church with all the cruelty and pride of the Pope himself: and yet this man, and his master Gregory, (*proh pudor!*) hath in these times been held up by a Protestant and evangelical divine as the

fathers of religion amongst us. They were the fathers of Prelacy and Papacy, and other lies, the enemies of true apostolical bishops, and of the gospel of truth: they were the greatest curses that this island ever saw. Indeed, such was the opinion of the Britons with respect to this newly-imported religion, that, according to Bede, it was their custom in his day to hold it in no account, and to have no more communion with them than with pagans. Shortly after this came a letter from Pope John, referred to in the former part, concerning the keeping of Easter and the Pelagian heresy. It is addressed in like manner to certain bishops and presbyters: some of whom were certainly of Ireland, and one, at least, is known to have been of Scotland, and abbot of Iona. But there is no record of any answer to these epistles. That, however, they were utterly ineffectual in their object of bringing the Culdees round to the Papal discipline, was soon after evidenced in the synod of Streoneshalch, now Whitby, in Yorkshire, which being convened to settle the question concerning Easter, Wilfrid, a Northumbrian abbot, appeared for Rome, against Colman, who defended the customs of the Culdees, as derived immediately from John the apostle. And when it was determined against Colman, he, and many other priests of the Scottish nation, rather than be imposed upon in ecclesiastical matters, forsook the English territory, and retired again into the land from which they had come forth; for it seems to be a national feature in the Scottish character to resist oppression, whether in Church or State. It cannot be wondered at, that there should have been such dislike to everything which comes from Rome, when we read of what kind was the life and conversation which these Scottish presbyters introduced into England. Bede, though strongly set against their ignorance and obstinacy, as he deemed it, dismisseth Colman and his monks from the realm of England with this noble testimony, in which every mind enlightened in the state of the Roman Church in the seventh century will discover the root of that abhorrence which they ever shewed to the uncanonical, that is, unpapal bishops of the Scots. "The place he governed shews how parsimonious he and his predecessors were; for there very few houses besides the church were found at their

departure, that is, only so many as without which civil conversation could not subsist. They had no money, but cattle; for if they received any money from rich persons they immediately gave it to the poor, there being no need to gather money or provide houses for the entertainment of the great men of the world; they never resorting to the church, but only to pray and hear the word of God. The king himself, when opportunity offered, came only with five or six servants, and having performed his devotions in the church, departed. But if they happened to take a repast there, being satisfied with only the plain and daily food of the brethren, they required no more: for the whole care of those teachers then was to serve God, not the world; to feed the soul and not the belly. For this reason the religious habit was at that time in great veneration; so that wheresoever any clergyman or monk happened to come, he was joyfully received by all persons as God's servant; and if they chanced to meet him upon the way, they ran to him, and, bowing, were glad either to be signed with his hand or blessed with his mouth. They also gave great attention to their words of exhortation; and on Sundays they flocked eagerly to the church, or the monasteries, not to feed their bodies, but to hear the word of God; and if any priest happened to come into a village, the inhabitants, flocking together, were diligent to ask the word of life of him; for the priests and clergymen went not into the villages on any other account than to preach, baptize, visit the sick, and, in few words, to take care of souls; and they were so free from all worldly avarice, that none received lands and possessions for building of monasteries, unless they were compelled to it by the worldly powers; the which custom was in all points for some time after observed in the churches of the Northumbrians."

The next attempt which was made to reduce this surviving relic of the primitive Church to the will of Rome, was made about forty years after, by that Adamnan who wrote the life of Columba, and was himself abbot of Iona. Having proceeded to the court of Alfred, king of the Angles, in order to conciliate peace, he was won over to the Papal opinions, and sought, when he returned, to win over his brethren; but fail-

ing there, he proceeded to Ireland on the same errand, and, as it is said, with more success; from whence returning, he sought again, but without success, to carry his point with the Scotch, who persisted thus steadfastly in their opposition to Rome. For this they had the honour of receiving the censure and condemnation of the synod of Vernon, in France, held in the year 755, who speak of them as "bishops who wandered about, having no parish;" that is, like the apostles, seeking in all regions of the world heathen to convert: "neither do we know what kind of ordination they had;" that is, they had it from themselves in the bosom of their own apostolical Church, and would hold it neither of the Roman pontiff nor of any other usurper. The other was the council of Châlons, held in the year 813, in the acts of which it is thus written: "There are, in certain places, Scots who pronounce themselves to be bishops, and neglecting many,"—that is, the Romanists, who despised or undervalued their ordination, and called the bishop of Rome master and father,—"ordain elders and deacons without licence of lords or superiors." Could a more exact description have been given of an evangelist after the school of Timothy or Titus, who were appointed by Paul to ordain elders and deacons in every city? So these men, having been set apart by their presbyteries to preach and plant the gospel, felt, like the servants of the Lord, that they were authorised to found churches, and to ordain elders and deacons wherever He gave faith to the people to whom they preached the everlasting gospel. I rejoice in these men; and I feel that their spirit lives in their children still. It is not the spirit of misrule; but it is the spirit of an ordained minister of Christ, whose mouth being opened to preach the word, and his hand privileged to minister the sacraments, hath in him a sacred power invested, whenever he comes into heathen parts, to plant churches, and not ask liberty—yea, he may not ask liberty—of any man on earth. I mean not that he should thus carry himself in Christian lands, already under ecclesiastical government, for that were to patronise schism; but that he may and ought so to do in all lands where the gospel is not preached and the Church is not established. These same Culdees, when, in the council above referred to, they

had their Christian liberty taken from them by King Oswy and his son Alcfrid, sought not to set up another church within his realm, but went forth into other parts. It is as needful for an ordained minister of the word to know and maintain his rights, as it is for an anointed king.—The next attempt of the bishop of Rome to impose upon our fathers was made by Boniface, archbishop of Mentz, whom we willingly enough resign to those who maintain that he was of English birth. He came into Scotland, after having brought many nations to submit to the see of Rome, amongst whom the Bavarians, Thuringians, Hessians, and others are mentioned, thinking to reduce our fathers to the same denial of Christ, and adoption of the Pope as head of the Church. But even in his attempts abroad he was encountered by two of our nation, Clement and Samson, who, being in those parts, rose up against him, and in their sermons publicly denounced him on these charges:—First, "That he studied to win men to the subjection of the Pope, and not to the obedience of Christ; secondly, that he laboured to establish a sovereign authority in the Pope's person, as if he only were the successor of the apostles, whereas all bishops are their successors as well as he; thirdly, that he went about the abolishing the priests' marriage, and exalted the single life beyond measure; fourthly, that he caused masses to be said for the dead, erected images in churches, and introduced divers rites unknown to the ancient Church:" for which most complete protestation Clement was excommunicated and condemned for an heretic, in a council holden at Rome; and with him Samson and several others, who sought to be heard and to plead their cause, but were not permitted: and for poor Clement, he was given over to the secular arm, and devoted to the flames. In Scotland itself Boniface met with an able opponent in John of Melrose, who likewise impugned the Papal impositions upon the truth. Yet we lament to say, that the Papal leaven began now to work in our land; and this same Boniface met with no small success, especially in the northern and north-eastern quarters of the kingdom: so that many of our countrymen, seduced by his example, as is recorded by Balæus, went forth and laboured amongst the nations in the same Antichristian service. These

things bring us down to the time of Charlemagne, and the opening of the ninth century, when, as we have already said, so many of our countrymen went forth and assisted that munificent prince in the stand he made against the rapid progress of Papal errors, which, indirectly, he himself had so much hand in establishing by the munificent grants which he made to the see of Rome.

The Scottish Church began soon to be pressed from a quarter where she might have expected better things, even from that realm of England which she had been chiefly instrumental in delivering from idolatry: but while the Culdee presbyter travelled from the North, bearing with him the prayers and ordination of his brethren, the Papal legate proceeded from the South, bearing with him the panoply of darkness; and England was divided between the truth and the lie, until at length the latter prevailed over the Saxon people: yet was Alfred the first king who consented to receive unction from Rome. We have seen the controversy of these two ways—the way of godliness, and the way of iniquity—in the matters of the keeping of Easter, and the tonsure; small indeed, but most important, as denying the right of Rome to interfere in the Church of Scotland; important, according to that maxim of the Lord, He that is faithful in the least is faithful in the greatest, and he that is unfaithful in the least is unfaithful in the greatest. But now, in the council of Celilythe or Ceal-hythe, held in England in the year 816, our Church received at the hand of England a most unnatural and ungrateful wound. The substance of the fifth canon of this synod is, that no Scotchman should be permitted to exercise any clerical ministry, as baptism, celebration of the mass or the eucharist, "because they had no order of metropolitans, and gave not honour to others." This shews that in those days the Scots had none amongst them above the rank of a presbyter, priest, or bishop, and that they gave no reverence to any superior orders. The thing most worthy of observation in this canon of the council of Ceal-hythe is, that the Scottish Church not only did not adopt, but contemned and protested against, the orders which sprung from the ambition of Rome.

About this time occurs a most important event in the

history of our Church; the parliament held at Scone, by Constantine the son of Kenneth, about the year 862, wherein various laws were enacted concerning churchmen, without acknowledgment and without presence either of Pope or prelate. It was ordained, "that churchmen should attend divine service diligently, and abstain from all civil affairs; that they should live content with the patrimony of their churches; that they should preach the word of God unto their people, and live as they teach; that they should be free from all charges of wars; that they should not feed horse nor hounds for pleasure; that they should have no weapons, nor judge in civil actions; and if they do, they should pay for the first fault a sum of money, and for the second they should be degraded." In this we see the light struggling with the darkness; the memory and presence of a better state of the Church struggling with the growth of corruption and error. We see the soil preparing for the seed of the enemy; we see Christian Scotland, that had been, and still is, struggling with Papal Scotland, that is coming into being. Yet though we be more than two centuries and a half in advance from Pope Gregory's time, when ecclesiastics attained their freedom from courts of justice, we have not the least hint of such a thing recognised in Scotland, we have not even the shadow of a protestation against it. But it was near for to come. In the very next reign of Greg, or Gregory the Great as he is called, the Church of Scotland is said, in the language of the Romanists, to have received liberty. Greg gave liberty to the persons of ecclesiastics, and the right which heretofore had lain with the Culdees passed over to the bishopric of St Andrews, which was first established in these times, and gradually grew to the supreme lordship, or primacy, over God's heritage in our realm. From this time forth the Papacy had the upper hand, and the Culdees struggled for their existence. For three long centuries, dating from the time of Pope Gregory, and for three and a half from the time of Justinian's edict, they had been able to ward off the enemy of souls; but now, no doubt from their declining zeal, he is let into the fold, and they must fight with him hand to hand. This king began to reign about the year 833. To quote from the Culdee

of St Andrews, as given by Archbishop Usher, "this is Rome the second, formed after the model of the first; this is the chief city of refuge; this is the city of the cities of Scotland." But still it was not till more than two centuries hereafter that the bishop of St Andrews was consecrated by one out of the kingdom, to wit, the archbishop of York; till which time, 1109, they had been consecrated by the elders, or seniors, or Culdees of that place.

The most learned man, perhaps, of this age, John Scott of Ayr, commonly distinguished by the surname Ærigena, from him of the same name born at Dunse, was a most able opposer of the Papal abominations of the carnal presence; for which he was condemned at the synod of Verceil, and found shelter in the court of Alfred, who promoted him to the dignity of his children's tutor, and he fell a sacrifice to the ignorance and enmity of the monks of Malmesbury, who murdered him because he spoke against the carnal presence. This was the age, perhaps, of greatest darkness, in which were sown the most fearful errors, as the doctrines of the mass and transubstantiation, the denying of the cup to the people, the worship of images, and many other things besides. In the next century we have many evidences, from foreign historians, of the labours of the Scots in foreign parts, and of the monasteries which were bestowed upon them, and of their expulsion "because of their strict religion and severe discipline;" and of their trials and sufferings there for the true faith, as may be seen accurately and learnedly set forth in Sir James Dalrymple's Collections, pp. 114, 115; a book beyond price, a bulwark of the independence of the Scottish Church against all who impugn it; wherein, with the modesty of a most learned man and the gravity of a searcher after truth, he doth triumphantly refute the levity and the cruelty with which our dearest rights, and the rights of truth, have been assailed by many. In this age the monks, or regulars, who may aptly be denominated the standing army of Antichrist, began to overspread Christendom, and to sow amongst the people those doctrines of devils which heretofore had been concocted in councils of the Church, and then arose against them, the body of the secular clergy, the parish priests

of the island. The point chiefly at issue was the marriage of the clergy, who now were called upon to contend against Rome for the honour of their wives and children. This question came to issue in the synod of Calne, held by Dunstan, unto which the king invited from Scotland learned men, of whom one is mentioned by name, Bernet, or Beornelus. These standing together for the lawfulness of priests' marriages, shew, that the Church within the realm of Scotland still continued in the good old way of resisting the encroachments of the man of sin.

The next age was one of great commotion, through the ambition of Hildebrand, a Pope who dared to dissolve the relationship between king and people, and to excommunicate the emperor, not in that Christian sense in which Theodosius was placed by Ambrose amongst the penitents,—a power which the Church may never forego in respect to any worldly dignity,—but in the Antichristian sense of dissolving the authority of the magistrate, which is ordained of God, and making the allegiance of the subjects to be in the keeping of the man of sin and his synagogue of Satan. From these enormities he was not withheld, by the witnesses whom God now raised up, in the person of Berengarius, and a great company of famous men of all ranks and orders, who followed him in denouncing this most daring of the sons of pride, whose long-handed ambition would have seized the supremacy of England also, but that he found in William the Conqueror a man both willing and able to defend his rights. "Loyalty," said he, "I would not give; nor will I, because neither have I promised it, nor do I find that my ancestors have done it unto thy ancestors." But now poor Scotland was destined to a trial of another and a more insidious kind, in the persons of her sovereigns, who, from the time of Malcolm Canmore and his Queen Margaret, the sister of Edgar Atheling, down to the time of the good King Robert the Bruce, lent themselves with an extraordinary zeal to bring in swarms of Romish monks, who overlaid the life of the kingdom, and introduced that darkness which, in the opinion of a most competent judge, the biographer of Knox and Melville, was deeper and grosser in Scotland than in any other of the Papal kingdoms. Though Malcolm, being bred

chiefly in England, and Margaret in Hungary, introduced into the kingdom many priests from these subject churches, they found the temper of the nation so firmly set against Rome, that though they erected new diocesan bishoprics, and founded one abbey of Papal monks, they did carry themselves in all these acts with great reverence of the Culdees, to whom also they made several munificent grants, as had been done by Macbeth and other kings before them. This Margaret, who, if I err not, was canonised for her services to the Church of Rome, is much celebrated, in the monkish legends, for the controversies which she was wont to hold, both in person and by her attendant monks and Romish priests, against the clergy of the national Church. The Romish writers report, that the Scottish Church received a reformation according to the rites of Rome by her procurement. Her son Edgar went forward in the same evil course, founding various monasteries and making many grants to the bishop of Durham; and his successor Alexander went further, in translating the prior of Durham to be bishop of St Andrews, who was consecrated, as hath been said, by the archbishop of York with great pomp, to proselytise the Scottish Church, wherein he had but poor success, dying of disappointment; and the like defeat had John, bishop of Glasgow, in the like undertaking. The king's great difficulty was to get his Church brought under Rome, without passing under the yoke of the Church of England. For, according to the canons, the bishop of St Andrews must be consecrated by an archbishop, of which order poor Scotland possessed none, and must needs be beholden to York or Canterbury. But this the stubborn spirit of the Scottish kings would not submit to: wherein we see no small advantage arising from the hereditary warfare between the two kingdoms. At length, however, in the reign of David, his brother, commonly called the saint, this point was yielded, and the bishop of St Andrews was consecrated by the archbishop of York, as had been done before. This led to the most impudent claim which perhaps was ever made, that the Church of Scotland should become thereby subject to the Church of England. This was in the reign of Henry II., who, in the Constitutions of Clarendon, having asserted the independency of the

Church of England, must needs disgrace the nobleness of his own deed, and enact the part of the Pope by the Church of Scotland, whereto he was encouraged by the acknowledgment and fealty done by Malcolm and his brother, for the lands of Northumberland; whereas, in former times, the heir of the crown did only perform that ceremony. The narrative of this transaction, as given by our historian Petrie, is as beautiful as the deliverance itself was wonderful. Scotland, in her most trying calamities, hath been always delivered by the hands of singular men. If it be the dignity of other kingdoms to produce societies and social institutions, it is the dignity of Scotland to produce men, and now at this crisis God raised up, in a youth, one who by his words of wisdom saved the independence of his Church. I shall give the narrative in the words of the historian above referred to: "The same Henry did claim the lands of Northumberland and —— from the Scots. Malcolm the Maiden and his brother William at two several times went to London, and did homage to the king for their lands; whereas, in former times, the heir of the crown only performed that ceremony. But then Henry would have more, that all the bishops of Scotland should be under the yoke of the archbishop of York as their metropolitan. At the first meeting at Norham, the Scots put it off, but with slender delays. The next year Hugo, Cardinal de St Angelo, (sent into England,) was for Henry in this purpose, and did cite the bishops of Scotland to compear before him in Northampton. They went thither, and the cardinal had a speech of humility and obedience, all to persuade the Scotch bishops to submit themselves unto the primate of York, who was a prelate of great respect, and whose credit in the court of Rome might serve them to good use. A young clerk [by name Gilbert Murray] stood up and spake in name of the others. His speech is written diversely: I shall shew it as I have copied it out of an old register of Dunkeld, (by the favour of bishop Alexander Lindsay.)

"'It is true, English nation, thou mightest have been noble, and more noble than some other nations, if thou hadst not craftily turned the power of thy nobility and the strength of thy fearful might into the presumption of tyranny, and

thy knowledge of liberal science into the shifting glosses of sophistry: but thou disposest not thy purposes as if thou wert led with reason, but being puffed up with thy strong armies, and trusting in thy great wealth, thou attempest, in thy wretched ambition and lust of domineering, to bring under thy jurisdiction the neighbour provinces and nations; more noble I will not say in multitude or power, but in lineage and antiquity; unto whom, if thou well consider ancient records, thou shouldest rather have been humbly obedient, or at least, laying aside thy rancour, have reigned together in perpetual love. And now, with all wickedness of pride that thou shewest, without any reason or law, but in thy ambitious power, thou seekest to oppress thy mother the Church of Scotland, which from the beginning hath been catholic and free, and which brought thee, when thou wast straying in the wilderness of heathenism, into the safeguard of the true faith and way unto life, even unto Jesus Christ the Author of eternal rest. She did wash thy kings and princes and people in the laver of holy baptism; she taught thee the commandments of God, and instructed thee in moral duties; she did accept many of thy nobles and others of meaner rank, when they were desirous to learn to read, and gladly gave them daily entertainment without price, books also to read, and instruction freely; she did also appoint, ordain, and consecrate thy bishops and priests, by the space of thirty years and above; she maintained the primacy and pontifical dignity within thee on the north side of Thames, as Beda witnesseth. And now, I pray, what recompence renderest thou unto her that hath bestowed so many benefits on thee? Is it bondage? or such as Judea rendered unto Christ, evil for good? It seemeth no other thing. Thou unkind vine, how art thou turned into bitterness! We looked for grapes, and thou bringest forth wild grapes; for judgment, and behold iniquity and crying. If thou couldest do as thou wouldest, thou wouldest draw thy mother, the Church of Scotland, whom thou shouldest honour with all reverence, into the basest and most wretched bondage. Fie, for shame! what is more base when thou wilt do no good to continue in doing wrong? even the serpents will not do harm to their own, albeit they cast forth to the hurt of

others: the vice of ingratitude hath not so much moderation; an ungrateful man doth wrack and massacre himself, and he despiseth and minceth the benefits for which he should be thankful, but multiplieth and enlargeth injuries. It was a true saying of Seneca, (I see,) The more some do owe, they hate the more; a small debt maketh a grievous enemy. What sayest thou, David? It is true they rendered me evil for good, and hatred for my love. It is a wretched thing (saith Gregory) to serve a lord who cannot be appeased with whatsoever obeysance. Therefore, thou Church of England, doest as becomes thee not: thou thinkest to carry what thou cravest, and to take what is not granted. Seek what is just, if thou wilt have pleasure in what thou seekest. And to the end I do not weary others with my words, albeit I have no charge to speak for the liberty of the Church of Scotland; and albeit all the clergy of Scotland would think otherwise, yet I dissent from subjecting her; and I do appeal unto the apostolical lord, unto whom immediately she is subject; and if it were needful for me to die in the cause, here I am ready to lay down my neck unto the sword: nor do I think it expedient to advise any more with my lords the prelates; nor, if they will do otherwise, do I consent unto them, for it is more honest to deny quickly what is demanded unjustly, than to drive off time by delays, seeing he is the less deceived who is refused betimes.'

"When Gilbert had so made an end, some English, both prelates and nobles, commended the young clerk that he had spoken so boldly for his nation, without flattering, and not abashed at the gravity of such authority; but others, because he spoke contrary unto their mind said, a Scot is naturally violent, and *in naso Scoti piper*. But Roger, archbishop of York, who principally had moved this business to bring the Church of Scotland into his see, uttered a groan, and then with a merry countenance laid his hand on Gilbert's head saying, *Ex tua non phareta exiit illa sagitta;* as if he had said, When ye stand in a good cause do not forethink what ye shall say, for in that hour it shall be given unto you. This Gilbert was much respected at home after that; and Pope Celestin put an end unto this debate, for he sent his bull unto King

William, granting that neither in ecclesiastical nor civil affairs the nation should answer unto any foreign judge whatsoever, except only unto the Pope, or his legate specially constituted. So far in the register of Dunkeld."

The learned baronet above referred to when speaking of Berengarius, and of the Albigenses, hath these words which I quote, as containing the judgment of a most competent, if not the most competent man, with respect to the time at which the Church of Scotland first acknowledged the authority of the Latin Church:—

"I come now to give an account of the state of religion in Scotland, in the year 1138, from Richard, prior of Hexham, treating of Alberic, bishop of Ostie, legate by Pope Innocent the Second, to the Scots, as well as to the English, after a description of his person, and the occasion of his mission; and of the Pope's character, and of the schism by the anti-pope Petrus Leo, and that he had come the length of Hexham, and relieved William Cummine, King David's chancellor, out of prison, he afterwards advanced to 'Carlisle, quarto die ante festum Sancti Michaelis ad Carlel pervenit, ibique regem Scotiæ cum episcopis, abbatibus, prioribus, baronibus suæ terra reperit.' Of whom our author adds the following character: 'Illi vero diu a Cisalpina, imo fere ab universa ecclesia discordantes, exosæ memoriæ Petro Leoni et apostasiæ ejus, nimium favisse videbantur. Tunc vero Divina gratia inspirati, mandata Innocentii Pape et legatum ejus, omnes unanimiter cum magna veneratione susceperunt,' &c. Here is a plain acknowledgment that the Scottish nation, both clergy and laity, had been a long time in schism and discord with the Cisalpine, and almost with the universal Church, that is (in the sense of the author, a Romanist, and who lived at that time) with the Romish Church, and many Churches over the world adhering to her. He does not say simply the universal Church, but with the restriction of almost; for besides the Scottish Church, there were great multitudes in Italy itself, France, Germany, and Flanders, who differed from the Romish Church, not in rites and smaller matters, but in the doctrines concerning the sacrament of the Lord's supper, and other points of faith, and renounced their

communion, and erected churches separate from Rome."—*Dalrymple's Collections*, pp. 258, 259.

The Latin words, quoted in the above extract, are taken from a description given of the Scottish Church, by Richard, prior of Hexham, when treating of his book De Bello Standardi, concerning this mission: "But they [the heads of the Scottish Church and nation] differing of a long while from the Cisalpine, yea, from almost the universal Church, seem to have favoured overmuch Peter of Lyons, of execrable memory, and his apostasy; but at this time, inspired by Divine grace, they almost unanimously with great veneration received the mandates of Pope Innocent and his legate." This is a distinct testimony, that, up to that time, the Scottish Church were identified in doctrine with the Waldenses, or Lyonites, as they were sometimes called, from Peter Waldo of Lyons. In this age the honour of our Church and country was supported in foreign parts by Richard de Sanoto Victore, who wrote much and well concerning various points of the orthodox faith, though he is said to have been the first who taught that the Virgin Mary was born without original sin,—a notion which is appearing again in Scotland, amongst those who hold that Christ was of her substance, and yet that it was not a sinful substance.

In the reign of Alexander II., an interdict was laid upon the kingdom for having levied war against England, which King John had put under the protection of the Pope. This the legate would not take off again without large contributions of money; on which account the clergy of Scotland having complained against him to Pope Honorius, obtained judgment in their favour, and power withal to hold a provincial synod without the presence of a metropolitan. Understanding, or affecting to understand, this privilege as of perpetual authority, they drew up a code of ordinances for all such synodal meetings, and instituted an office-bearer by name, "Custos Statutorum," keeper of the statutes; and they continued to assemble without application to the holy see. The next attempt of the Pope against the liberties of our Church and kingdom, met with a reply from King Alexander the Second, which shews, that, however much attempted in

the former reign, a legate from the Pope had never yet exercised authority in Scotland. It was at the conference held at York 1237, between Henry and Alexander, when Otto the Pope's legate desired to go to Scotland, as he said, to redress the affairs of the Church; to whom the Scottish king made reply,—"I remember not that ever a legate was in my land, neither have I need of one, thanks be to God; neither was any in my father's time, nor in any of my ancestors; neither will I suffer any so long as I may." Nevertheless he suffered money to go forth of the kingdom for the use of the Pope. The clergy, in the days of Alexander III., positively refused to meet the cardinal legate at York, and would not observe the canons there enacted, but enacted others of their own, in a council holden at Perth, whereby the liberties of the Church were established, and a good understanding prevailed between the civil and ecclesiastical state. In the same century the Pope gave, or rather sold, letters summoning a number of Scotsmen to appear in England before his legate, which they despised to do, alleging the privilege of Scotsmen to answer to no power without the kingdom; and so his mandate fell to the ground.

And now we come to the most glorious era in the history of our land, when the character of our Church and nation was put to the sternest proof which was ever endured by any people under heaven, except perhaps the Jews in the time of Maccabeus; when God raised up, in the persons of William Wallace and Robert the Bruce, two mighty men of war, who vindicated the rights of our nation against the might of England, led by the mightiest of her kings. When I look at the unwearied valiancy of Scotland, a mere handful of men compared with the might of France which bowed before the conquering Edwards and Henrys, I can account for it in no way, save by our comparative freedom from the superstition and wickedness of the Papal religion. Patriotism was yet unbroken by appeals to Rome. Loyalty was not yet enervated by the supremacy of a priest, the bands of natural life were not broken by the impostures of the Papacy; the fear of God, and not of the Pope, was in the land; and therefore, I believe, the people were so mighty and could not be broken. It is

recorded in the annals of the wars of Bruce, that when the good lord James Douglas sent one day a person to reconnoitre a solitary house, he reported that he heard the inmates use the devil's name in their conversation; then, said James of Douglas, they must be English soldiers, for none of our people would so speak. And so it proved to be, when having beset the house he took them prisoners, and amongst them Randolph, his future companion in arms, and next to the king and himself the greatest saviour of his country. This shews under what a bridle the people were wont in those days to keep their tongue, which an apostle hath pronounced one of the best proofs of a perfect man. I cannot look upon the great national controversy of this age without seeing in it the hand of God withstanding not only the usurpation of England, but likewise the usurpation of the Pope; who, when he was appealed to in the question, forbade Edward from proceeding, "because," said he, "the sovereignty of Scotland belonged unto the Church." This opened the eyes of the people to the ambition of the Roman see, which was still further disclosed, when after the battle of Bannockburn the Pope sent a legate to restrain the Scots from troubling England till he should have decided on King Edward's claim to the crown of Scotland. "But in this," said the good King Robert, "his holiness must excuse me, for I will not be so unwise as to let the advantage I have slip out of my hands;" whereupon the kingdom was laid under an interdict, which, at the entreaty of the nobles, was soon after removed. There are several other acts of our kings resisting the usurpations of the Pope, which it may be as well to mention in a few words, and so finish the subject of the Culdees, and the resistance which they were making during these reigns. In the third parliament of James the First, an act was made that all subjects should be ruled by the king's laws only; and in the eighth parliament, that if any did fly or appeal from the king's judgment, he should be accounted a rebel, and punished accordingly. In the reign of James the Third, holding of livings *in commendam*, that is, without a resident and officiating minister, was forbidden within the realm; and it was under pain of rebellion that any one

should purchase or accept such *commendams* otherwise than for the space of six months: and other acts in the same reign and the following one, were made still further to withstand Papal encroachments; and thus things continued with little alteration until the time when the whole Papal system was rejected at the Reformation.

We should be far from the truth if we were to suppose, as some have done, that, because the Culdees withstood the Papacy in the matter of Easter, and of the tonsure, they therefore deemed the essence of religion to stand in such observances, or that they had no other grounds of difference with Rome: the truth is, that they differed in everything that constitutes the Christian Church distinct from the synagogue of Satan. In government they knew no order but presbyter and deacon; and when from the number of the elders one was to be appointed to any set office, it was done by the consent of those with whom he was associated, as we have seen in respect to those bishops who converted the English to the Christian faith. In respect of doctrine, they rejected confession to the priest, and absolution of the priest; they baptized in any water they came to by immersion, without the consecrated chrism; they had no sacrament nor ordinance of confirmation; their churches were dedicated to the Holy Trinity, and not to any saint; they denied the intercession of the living for the dead; they rejected works of supererogation, denied all merit of their own, and hoped for salvation only from the mercy of God, through faith in Jesus Christ. They celebrated their office after their own manner; and when the monastic orders of Rome were introduced into Scotland, it was "for extending and exalting the worship and honour of God, and for serving Him after a canonical manner." They abhorred the ordinance of the Papal Church which forbade priests to marry; and in one word, whether we look positively, to that which is testified of them, or negatively, to that which is denied to them by the Papal writers, directly to the resistance of the Culdees resident in our own country, or indirectly to the resistance which their sons in foreign parts made to the Papal inventions, we cannot doubt for a moment that in the sum and substance of what constitutes religion and a Church,

they were directly opposed to the inventions and doctrines of Rome.

With respect to the extent of this holy ministry in Scotland, we are able, from the learned work of Dr Jamieson, to lay down their principal seats. At Abernethy, the ancient capital of the Picts, was a foundation of the greatest antiquity, reaching back, as some suppose, into the fifth century; and it continued to exist till the latter end of the thirteenth century, when it fell into the hands of the canons regular. It was also a great school of learning, for in this respect the Culdees always followed the example of Iona. It was not a bishopric, as some have said; but within the diocese of Dunblane, after diocesan Episcopacy came into Scotland, an innovation made at the conclusion of the ninth century. At Lochleven, beside Kinross, there was a monastery of Culdees, dating its origin so far back as the year 700, which received various gifts from our kings, Macbeth, Malcolm the Third, Edgar, and Etheldred, and from three of the bishops of St Andrews. It was founded by St Serf, or Servanus, contemporary with Adamnan, Abbot of Iona. At Dunkeld, there was "founded an illustrious monastery by Constantine, king of the Picts, from his devotion for St Columba, at that time patron of the whole kingdom, where he placed those religious called Kuldees, having wives according to the custom of the Oriental Church, from whom they kept themselves while they ministered in courses." There is reason to believe "that after Iona was destroyed by the Danes, anno 801, or after its power over the Pictish churches ceased, the abbot of Dunkeld, a Culdee, was for a time regarded as supreme of the Pictish churches;"—supreme, that is, in the sense in which the abbot of Iona was supreme, being, as it were, the parent stock from which this order arose; but having no shadow of episcopal jurisdiction or prelatical dignity; for Dunkeld did not become a bishopric till the time of Alexander, in the twelfth century. The foundation of Andrews, or Kilremont, as it was called, though it is ambitious of an earlier origin, was made by Hungus, in the year 825. Kilde, in the year 943, became a bishopric; at the close of the same century, the bishop being elected by the Culdees, received an order of canons in the time of David the

First, by whom the Culdees were dispossessed, though not without a strenuous resistance, at the end of the thirteenth or the beginning of the fourteenth century. In the time of Kenneth, (this is he who gave the great city of Brechin to the Lord,) a Culdee monastery was established there in the year 970; to which was added a bishop in the days of King David, who yet, as was commonly the case, respected both the Culdees and their prior. The foundation at Dunblane takes its origin about the year 1000, in the time of Kenneth III., and after 124 years grew to be a bishopric, in the time of David I. The Culdees of Monymusk, in Aberdeenshire, though not of so early an origin, are entitled to honourable mention, for the steadiness with which they resisted the invasions of the bishops of St Andrews in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and the honourable and independent privileges which they secured for themselves, which yet did not prevent them, like their brethren of St Andrews, Lochleven, Dunkeld, and Brechin, from being driven away by the invasions of the canons regular, the standing army of Rome. But I make no doubt that this was ordered in mercy to the suffering Church of Scotland, to the end that these confessors against the Papacy might be forced home upon the people, and preserve in the recesses of the country the record of a better age, and plant in the memory and traditions of Scotland that love of primitive simplicity which, at the Reformation, burst forth in its strength, like Samson out of his sleep, and shook off the bonds of darkness with which it had been bound. Besides these, there was an establishment at Portmoak founded in the ninth century; at Dunfermline, from the time of Malcolm Canmore till the time of David, who introduced monks from Canterbury; at Scone, which was reformed after the Papal mode in the time of the first Alexander; probably also at Kirkcaldy, (Kirculdee, cella Culdeorum;) at Melrose, founded by Aidan, who converted the Northumbrians, and brought with him twelve youths, after the manner of Columba. This house was destroyed in the ninth century, and again rebuilt in the time of David I. Besides these, which are of chief account, there were founded monasteries by Columba in Crusa and Oronsay, two of the Western Isles. And others are mentioned, as

Achaluing in Ethica, Himba or Hinbu, and Elen-naohm; also Kill-Diun, or Dimha, at Lochava, or Lochorr; also at Govan, on the Clyde, Abercorn, so often mentioned by Bede. The Culdees certainly planted the gospel in the Orkneys also, and, there is reason to believe, even in Ireland. The chapels dedicated to the memory of Columba are so numerous and widespread, as to leave no doubt of the extent to which he and his followers propagated the Christian faith.

For six centuries, commonly called the dark ages, they preserved in Scotland the light of Divine truth, the love of sacred learning, the reverence of apostolic tradition, the obedience of the Holy Scriptures, and they sent forth over all Europe lights to enlighten the nations, men of might to contend against the man of sin; which made the Scottish name to be identified during those times with piety and learning: and when they could no longer preserve their king and country from the depredations of the lovers of darkness, they retired into their cells, the fastnesses of their piety and religion, and thence maintained a noble resistance for the relics of their order. Though much corrupted and greatly fallen from their primitive purity and valour, they did still preserve a steady warfare against the Roman name. Nor do they cease to be visible on the stage of history until about the time that Grosteste, bishop of Lincoln, defied the Pope, and Wickliffe denounced the monks as the servants of the devil. But no eye of history can penetrate into the homes and habitations and hearts of a people; and therefore no one can say how long, after the beginning of the fourteenth century, when we lose sight of them in the existing records of our country, they may have subsisted amongst the people, like the Druids and the bards of preceding ages; and preserved throughout the land a certain leaven of better things, the memory of departed liberty, the hope and the desire of liberty again. To me, reflecting upon the long-lived traditions of my native land, evidenced by the poems of Ossian and the minstrelsy of the Border, and those tales which have appeared in our own day, and of which ten times more than have yet appeared do circulate among the people of Scotland;—to me, I say, reflecting upon the traditionary lore of my native land, and the rever-

ence for antiquity which characterises the people of the Scottish name, it is a thing beyond doubt, that the wrestlings of the Culdees against the Papacy did disseminate through Scotland that hatred of Roman superstition, and preserve that love of religious liberty, and preference of a primitive Church, without pomp or ceremonies, which have distinguished and blessed us amongst the nations of Christendom.

NOTES ON THE STANDARDS

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THE Church of Scotland was no sooner born by the Reformation into a new life, than she had, like her Divine Master, to seek shelter in foreign parts; as also had the Church of England; where, under the protection of Geneva and the free towns of Germany, they grew up in love, like twin sisters, knowing and loving one another better in their adversity than afterwards they did in their prosperity. In consequence, and in token of which, our reformers adopted, as the first symbol of their faith, that enlargement or commentary of the Apostles' Creed which had been adopted by the English Church at Geneva as the confession of their faith. Of the documents now reprinted this is the first in date:—

I. *The Confession of Faith used in the English Congregation at Geneva.*

NOTE FIRST.—This Confession is strong and explicit upon the orthodox doctrine now controverted in our Church; namely, that Christ's death was "a sacrifice to purge the sins of all the world;" and, which is still more important, that the

* These Notes appeared as an Introduction to an edition of the official and authoritative Standards of the Church of Scotland, published by Mr Irving at the time when the well-known controversy resulting from the deposition of Mr Campbell of Row, and others, was exciting deep feeling in Scotland.—G. C.

same proceedeth out "of God's free mercy, without compulsion." This is most important as giving to the atonement its true moral character, for the expression of a disposition of mercy, ever existing in the bosom of God, to every creature under heaven. There is a class of theologians who treat of the work of Christ as if it were the providing a huge stock of merit, not only sufficient for this world, but for a thousand worlds; which is to make it virtually the same with St Peter's great treasury of merits, provided for sin-indulgence. The atonement is the expression of a disposition in the mind of a Person towards other persons, which they may ever, and at all times, calculate upon to that amount,—the expression of God's love to all men, even to the chief sinners of mankind.

NOTE SECOND.—This Confession is likewise good as to the doctrine of the resurrection, to which it doth "attribute our resurrection;" and maketh "the victory of our faith to stand" thereon, so that, without the faith of the resurrection, we cannot feel the benefit of the death of Christ.

NOTE THIRD.—It is sufficient also as to the important point of Christ's identity with us in all things, except sin, "became man, in all things like unto us, sin excepted;" "born of the Virgin Mary according to the flesh;" "and forasmuch as He, being only God, could not feel death; neither, being only man, could overcome death; He joined both together, and suffered His humanity to be punished with most cruel death, feeling in Himself the anger and most severe judgment of God, even as if He had been in the extreme torment of hell, and therefore cried with a loud voice, My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?"

NOTE FOURTH.—The Confession is also sufficient in what respects the Church both as to its "consenting in faith, hope, and charity;" and also to its "using the gifts of God, whether they be temporal or spiritual, to the profit and furtherance of the same." What gifts are here to be understood, no one will question, when he taketh into consideration these references at the foot of the page: Acts ii. 41, &c., iv. 32, &c.; Rom. xii. 4, &c.; 1 Cor. xii.; Eph. iv. 7, 11, 12; which are the very passages of Scripture that contain the account of what they are pleased, in these our days, to term "extraordinary," and to

deny to be for continuance in the Church. The Church of Scotland, in adopting this Confession, approves their continuance; and I delight here to shew also what was the mind of the Church of England on this subject, as stated in the Homily concerning the Holy Ghost (Part i.): "The Holy Ghost doth ALWAYS DECLARE HIMSELF by His fruitful and gracious gifts —namely, by the word of wisdom, by the word of knowledge, which is the understanding of the Scriptures by faith, in doing of miracles, by healing them that are diseased, by prophecy, which is the declaration of God's mysteries, by discerning of spirits, diversities of tongues, interpretation of tongues, and so forth. All which gifts, as they proceed from one Spirit, and are severally given to man according to the measurable distribution of the Holy Ghost; even so do they bring men, and not without good cause, into a wonderful admiration of God's power."

NOTE FIFTH.—This Confession is defective, and I think somewhat evasive, in the matter of the descent into hell, explaining away that necessary part of the faith into the dolours which our Lord's soul endured on the cross: whereas, in the Apostles' Creed, as in the Holy Scriptures, it is stated as a fact, giving to us assurance, under that part of death which consisteth in the soul going to hades, to wait till judgment; whither Christ's soul also went, yet remained not captive, but led the captivity captive, and emancipated the souls of all believers from that imprisonment, as He shall emancipate their bodies from the grave in the day of the resurrection. There are some other points wherein this Confession is defective from, though not contradictory of, the truth; as the first resurrection, and the reign of Christ on earth, whereof we shall have to speak under the next head. But, upon the whole, it is an excellent document, drawn up with great plainness and simplicity; with as much brevity as is consistent with clearness, and with as much openness of charity as is consistent with soundness in the faith.

II. *The Scottish Confession.*

The next document is the pillar of the Reformation Church of Scotland, which hath derived little help from the West-

minster Confession of Faith: whereas these twenty-five articles, ratified in the Parliament of Scotland in the year 1560, not only at that time united the states of the kingdom in one firm band against the Papacy, but also rallied the people at sundry times of trouble and distress for a whole century thereafter; and it may be said even until the Revolution, when the Church came into that haven of rest, which has proved far more pernicious to her than all the storms she ever passed through. For, though the Westminster Confession was adopted as a platform of communion with the English Presbyterians in the year 1647, it exerted little or no influence upon our Church, was hardly felt as an operative principle either of good or evil, until the Revolution of 1688; so that the Scottish Confession was the banner of the Church, in all her wrestlings and conflicts, the Westminster Confession but as the camp-colours which she hath used during her days of peace; the one for battle, the other for fair appearance and good order. This document consisteth of twenty-five articles, and is written in a most honest, straightforward, manly style, without compliment or flattery, without affectation of logical precision or learned accuracy, as if it came fresh from the heart of laborious workmen, all the day long busy with the preaching of the truth, and sitting down at night to embody the heads of what they continually taught. There is a freshness of life about it, which no frequency of reading wears off. Upon this also I would make one or two remarks.

NOTE FIRST.—This Confession is most precious on this account, that it hath guarded as well as could be against the abuse of Confessions, by being advanced into a certain lordship over the consciences of the members and ministers of the Church, yea, and of the word of God itself. So little did the writers of it think that they were binding the Church of Scotland to the very words and sentences and even matters of this their deed of faith, that they declare themselves to be bound by it only so long as they should see it to be according to God's word, and no longer. And so little did they think with our present authorities, who claim to be their representatives, that after it had been agreed on by the Church, and ratified by Parliament, it cannot be changed, and if any one differ from

it he must go out of the Church, that they solemnly promise and protest their willingness to submit it, at all times, to the arbitriment of God's word, and to modify it thereto; themselves to become the willing instruments of amending it. And why? Because they trembled at God's word. And why is it not so now? Because the Church doth no longer tremble at God's word, but trembleth for her own security, ease, and comfort. The passages are many to this effect. Take this, of which I know not whether to admire more the elegance or the honesty: "Protesting, that if any man will note in this our Confession any article, or sentence, repugning to God's holy word, that it would please him of his gentleness, and for Christian charity's sake, admonish us of the same in writing; and we upon our honour and fidelity do promise unto him satisfaction from the mouth of God, (that is, from the Holy Scriptures,) or else reformation of that which he shall prove to be amiss." When an able and a pious and a learned preacher took up this office, and asked satisfaction from the Scriptures upon one or two points from the last General Assembly, he was treated as an insolent fellow, and deprived of his licence without one word of explanation or even of examination.

"Tempora mutantur, et nos mutamur in illis."

"The times are changed, the men still more." See also the whole of Article xx. "Of General Councils, of their power, authority, and cause of their convention."

NOTE SECOND.—This the native and proper Confession of our Church, is very strong upon the nature of faith, as being no doubtsome, wavering, unresolved persuasion, but a firm and strong assurance of our own personal interest in Christ; and so this they make to be not only of the essence, but the very essence of regeneration, and the one work of the Holy Ghost, "which regeneration is wrought by the power of the Holy Ghost, working in the hearts of the elect of God an assured faith in the promise of God, revealed to us in His word; by which faith we apprehend Christ Jesus with the graces and benefits promised in Him." Art. iii.—And speaking of faith as it were in an incidental manner, they never hesitate to interchange it with assurance; for example, (Art. xii.): "This

our faith, and assurance of the same, proceeds not from flesh and blood, that is to say, from no natural powers within us, but is the inspiration of the Holy Ghost."

NOTE THIRD.—This Confession of ours is very strong and stable upon the subject of the Incarnation of the Son of God, and the nature of the flesh in which He was incarnate.—First, As to its mortality and corruptibility in itself, and its receiving immortality and incorruption from the Godhead: "As the eternal Godhead hath given to the flesh of Christ Jesus (which of its own nature was mortal and corruptible) life and immortality; so doth Christ Jesus, His flesh and blood eaten and drunken by us, give unto us the same prerogatives," (Art. xxi.) And the proofs adduced of this, are the passages of the four Gospels, where He is declared to have yielded up the ghost. The argument being, His flesh was mortal and corruptible because He did die.—Secondly, As to His being of the substance of His mother, and not any other, as of Adam: "Who took the nature of mankind, of the substance of a woman, to wit, of a virgin, and that by operation of the Holy Ghost, and so was born the just seed of David," (Art. vi.) Again: "It behoved that the Son of God should descend unto us, and take to Himself a body of our body, flesh of our flesh, and bone of our bones," (Art. viii.)—Thirdly, With respect to "imbecility," or weakness of His flesh: "But because the only Godhead could not suffer death, neither yet could the only manhead overcome the same, He joined both together in one person, that the imbecility of the one should suffer, and be subject to death, (which we had deserved,) and the infinite and invincible power of the other, to wit, of the Godhead, should triumph, and purchase to us life, liberty, and perpetual victory."—Finally, With respect to its being substantially and completely this nature of ours: "We confess and acknowledge Immanuel very God and very man, two perfect natures, united and joined in one person: by which our Confession, we condemn the damnable and pestilent heresies of Arius, Marcion, Eutyches, and Nestorius, and such others as either did deny the eternity of His Godhead, or the verity of His human nature, or confounded them, or yet divided them."—And thus are we clearly taught, that Christ

took our whole nature; and that His human nature was not essentially, but only through union with God and unction of the eternal Spirit, incorruptible, mighty, and holy.

NOTE FOURTH.—This, the Confession of the Protestant Church of Scotland, is mighty upon the sacraments, that strongest hold of faith, which superstition is ever endeavouring to possess, and infidelity to undermine. For example: "And thus we utterly condemn the vanity of these that affirm sacraments to be nothing else but naked and bare signs; no, we assuredly believe, that by Baptism we are engrafted in Christ Jesus, to be made partakers of His justice, whereby our sins are covered and remitted: and also, that in the Supper, rightly used, Christ Jesus is so joined with us, that He becometh very nourishment and food to our souls: not that we imagine any transubstantiation of bread into Christ's natural body, and of wine into His natural blood, as the Papists have perniciously taught, and damnably believed; but this union and conjunction, which we have with the body and blood of Christ Jesus, in the right use of the sacraments, wrought by operation of the Holy Ghost, who by true faith carrieth us above all things that are visible, carnal, and earthly, and maketh us to feed upon the body and blood of Christ Jesus, which was once broken and shed for us, which now is in heaven, and appeareth in the presence of His Father for us; and yet, notwithstanding the far distance of place which is between His body now glorified in heaven, and us now mortal on this earth; yet we most assuredly believe, that the bread which we break is the commmunion of Christ's body, and the cup which we bless is the communion of His blood. So that we confess, and undoubtedly believe, that the faithful, in the right use of the Lord's table, do so eat the body, and drink the blood of the Lord Jesus, that He remaineth in them, and they in Him; yea, they are so made flesh of His flesh, and bone of His bones, that as the eternal Godhead hath given to the flesh of Christ Jesus (which of its own nature was mortal and corruptible) life and immortality; so doth Christ Jesus his flesh and blood, eaten and drunken by us, give unto us the same prerogatives."—Again: "And therefore, whosoever slandereth us, that we affirm and believe sacra-

ments to be naked and bare signs, do injury unto us, and speak against the manifest truth. But this liberally and frankly we confess, that we make a distinction between Christ Jesus in His eternal substance, and between the elements in the sacramental signs; so that we will neither worship the signs, in place of that which is signified by them; neither yet do we despise and interpret them as unprofitable and vain, but do use them with all reverence, examining ourselves diligently before that we so do; because we are assured by the mouth of the apostle, that such as 'eat of that bread, and drink of that cup unworthily, are guilty of the body and blood of Christ Jesus.' "—It was this article which delivered me from the infidelity of Evangelicalism, which denies any gift of God either in the work of Christ, or in the sacraments, or anywhere, until we experience it to be within ourselves; making God a mere promiser, until we become receivers; making His bounty and beneficence naught but words, till we make it reality by accepting thereof; in one word, making religion only subjective in the believer, and not elective in God,—objective in Christ, in order that it may be subjective in the believer; a religion of moods, and not of purposes and facts; having its reality in the creature, its proposal of reality only in God. The true doctrine of the sacraments will always strike this infidelity upon the head. It revolutionised my mind; and that not till after I had been the object of attraction to a nation; shewing me how vain are natural gifts to discern spiritual realities. I can never express the obligations which I and hundreds, both of ministers and members of the Church of Christ, whom it hath pleased God through me to benefit, owe to the straightforward, uncompromising, thoroughgoing boldness of that twenty-first Article of our Confession, which both parties in the Church, Moderate and Evangelical, as heartily repudiate as ever they did repudiate that holy man of God, John Campbell, from the ministry, for maintaining the substance of the same truth: namely, the veritable gift which Christ is to the reprobate as much as to the elect. *Hinc illæ lachrymæ.* My mother! O my mother!

NOTE FIFTH.—The Confession is good against the modern notion of a spiritual coming of Christ, (as they term it;) that

is, a work done in the spirit, but not in person, for the end of bringing all things under Him upon the earth, Antichrist and all, some thousand years before the judgment. Doctors in our Church have laboured hard in those days to place the days of refreshing before the coming of Christ in person to judge the earth, and they have spoken of His going away from the earth again with His people as a point of unquestionable orthodoxy. Hear what our reformers declare thereon: "Received all power in heaven and earth, where He sitteth at the right hand of the Father, inaugurate in His kingdom, Advocate and only Mediator for us; which glory, honour, and prerogative, He alone, amongst the brethren, shall possess till that all His enemies be made His footstool, as that we undoubtedly believe that they shall be in the final judgment, to the execution whereof, we certainly believe, that the same our Lord Jesus shall as visibly return as that He was seen to ascend; AND THEN we firmly believe that the time of refreshing and restitution of all things shall come, insomuch that these that from the beginning have suffered violence, injury, and wrong, for righteousness' sake, shall inherit that blessed immortality promised from the beginning; but contrariwise, the stubborn, inobedient, cruel oppressors, filthy persons, idolaters, and all such sorts of unfaithful, shall be cast into the dungeon of utter darkness, where the worm shall not die, neither yet shall their fire be extinguished." This is sound doctrine; I, who am a Millenarian, ask no other confession of my creed; understanding the day of judgment as the same expression is used in the Scriptures of the time when the day of grace endeth.

NOTE SIXTH.—The idea of a church (not *the* Church) given in this precious symbol of our faith, and the faith of our fathers, is true, and well worthy of particular notice in these days, when it is believed that there are but two Churches in all this island, the Church of Scotland, and the Church of England; which, in truth, are the only two things so named, that are, properly speaking, not *Churches*, but religious nationalities; or national communions of churches: a church hath the same relation to *the National Church*, which *a person* hath to *the community*. "Wheresoever then these former

notes (sound doctrine preached, sacraments rightly administered, and discipline uprightly ministered) are seen, and of any time continue, (be the number never so few, about two or three,) there, without all doubt, is the true Church of Christ, who, according to His promise, is in the midst of them: not that universal of which we have before spoken, but particular, such as were in Corinthus, Galatia, Ephesus, and other places, wherein the ministry was planted by Paul, and were of himself named the churches of God: and such churches, we, the inhabitants of the realm of Scotland, professors of Christ Jesus, profess ourselves to have in our cities, towns, and places reformed, for the doctrine taught in our churches, contained in the written word of God; to wit, in the books of the Old and New Testaments: in these books we mean, which of the ancients have been reputed canonical, in the which we affirm, that all things necessary to be believed for the salvation of mankind are sufficiently expressed." The integrity of a church within itself, its power to act in all ways for Christ, its Head, its completeness in all respects, hath nothing to do with Presbytery, Synod, or General Assembly, or establishment by the State, or the like circumstances; which arise out of other obligations, but are in nowise necessary to give a church the same noble standing as the church of Corinthus had, or of Ephesus, with all its gifts of the Holy Ghost, and office-bearers within itself, and power of sending forth men into every region to preach the gospel. In one word, the Church of which I am a minister, while doctrine, sacraments, and discipline are rightly administered in it, is, in the eye of our reformers, as true and complete a Church, as if it were the limb of a Presbytery, Synod, or General Assembly. This is an awfully important conclusion, and I thank the reformers for being so explicit upon it. I learned it not from them, but from the patient study of the seven epistles in the Apocalypse. But I rejoice to know that it is the doctrine approved by the Church of Scotland.

I now dismiss this document, with the highest encomium which I am capable of bestowing upon a work of fallible man. It hath been profitable to my soul, and to my flock. For several years I was in the habit of reading it twice in the year.

to my people; and once upon a time when two men whom I wished to make elders had their difficulties in respect to the Westminster Confession, I found them most cordial in giving their assent to this. So that I may say my own church is constituted upon it. I love it for another reason, that it is purely a Confession of Faith, containing neither matters of church government nor discipline. And if, as I foresee, the faithful of all Churches should be cast out of their communions, they could, without forfeiting any of their peculiarities of government and of worship, find in this standard a rallying point. Its doctrine is sound, its expression is clear, its spirit is large and liberal, its dignity is personal and not dogmatical, and it is all redolent with the unction of holiness and truth. With a very few enlargements of what is implied, but not fully opened, with no changes or alterations, I could give it forth as the full confession of my faith.

III. *The First Book of Discipline.*

This was drawn up by the same ministers who drew up the Confession, immediately upon the dissolution of the Parliament 1560, wherein the Confession had been ratified and confirmed by the assembled estates of the kingdom. "The Parliament dissolved, consultation was had, how the Church might be established in a good and godly policy, which by the Papists was altogether defaced. Commission and charge was given to Mr John Winrem sub-prior of St Andrews, Mr John Spotiswood, John Willock, Mr John Douglas rector of St Andrews, Mr John Row, and John Knox, to draw in a volume the policy and discipline of the Church, as well as they had done the doctrine, which they did, and presented it to the nobility, who did peruse it many days. Some approved it, and willed the same to have been set forth by a law; others, perceiving their carnal liberty and worldly commodity somewhat to be impaired thereby, grudged, insomuch that the name of the Book of Discipline became odious unto them. Everything that repugned to their corrupt imaginations was termed, in their mockage, devout imaginations. The cause we have before declared; some were licentious, some had greedily gripped the possessions of the Church, and others thought

that they would not lack their part of Christ's coat, yea, and that before that ever He was crucified, as by the preachers they were oft rebuked. . . . . Yet the same Book of Discipline was subscribed by a great part of the nobility; to wit, the Duke, the Earl of Arran, the Earls Argyle, Glencairn, Marshal, Monteith, Morton, Rothes, Lord James after Earl of Murray, Lord Yester, Boyd, Ochiltrie, Master of Maxwel, Lord Lindsay elder, and the Master after Lord Barrons, Drumlanrig, Lothingwar, Garleiss, Bargany, Mr Alexander Gordon, bishop of Galloway, (this bishop of Galloway, as he renounced Popery, so did he Prelacy; witness his subscription of the Book of Discipline, as the rest of the prelates did, who did join to the Reformation,) Alexander Campbell, dean of Murray, with a great number more, subscribed and approved the said Book of Discipline in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh, the 27th day of January, the year of our Lord God 1561, by their approbation, in these words:—'We who have subscribed these presents, having advised with the articles herein specified, and as is above-mentioned from the beginning of this book, think the same good, and conform to God's word in all points, conform to the notes and additions thereto, asked, and promised to set the same forward at the uttermost of our powers; providing that the bishops, abbots, priors, and other prelates and beneficed men, which else have adjoined themselves to us, bruik the revenues of their benefices during their lifetimes; they sustaining and upholding the ministry and ministers, as is herein specified, for preaching of the word and ministring of the sacraments.'"

The First Book of Discipline was submitted to Parliament, with the following faithful and dutiful commendation:—"To the great council of Scotland now admitted to the government, by the providence of God, and by the common consent of the estates thereof. Your honours' humble servants and ministers of Christ Jesus within the same, wish grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, with the perpetual increase of the Holy Spirit. From your honours we received a charge dated at Edinburgh the 29th of April, in the year of our Lord 1560, requiring and commanding us in the name of the eternal God, as we will answer

in His presence, to commit to writing, and in a book deliver to your wisdoms our judgments touching the reformation of religion which heretofore in this realm (as in others) hath been utterly corrupted: upon the receipt whereof, (so many of us as were in this town,) did conveen, and in unity of mind do offer unto your wisdoms these subsequents, for common order and uniformity to be observed in this realm concerning doctrine, administration of sacraments, election of ministers, provision for their sustentation, ecclesiastical discipline, and policy of the Church; most humbly requiring your honours, that as you look for participation with Christ Jesus, that neither ye admit anything which God's plain word shall not approve, neither yet that ye shall reject such ordinances as equity, justice, and God's word do specify. For as we will not bind your wisdoms to our judgments further than we are able to prove by God's plain Scriptures: so must we most humbly crave of you, even as ye will answer in God's presence, (before whom both ye and we must appear to render accounts of all our facts,) that ye repudiate nothing for pleasure and affection of men, which ye be not able to improve by God's written and revealed word." Upon this document also we shall make a few notes, making our quotations from the larger work.

NOTE FIRST.—The First Book of Discipline is a most comprehensive scheme for the well-ordering of all the churches, and for bringing about a unity of faith and practice in the nation; it belongs to the Church considered as national, and is the basis upon which the churches which had grown up in Scotland might confederate into one. With a high hand it sets at naught and abolishes the doctrine of transmission of ordination through a regular succession of bishops, and even excommunicates the Roman Catholic clergy from the number of those who have a lawful calling to the ministry. And if the Church of Scotland be a true Church of God, it is so in despite of hereditary ordination, to which it gave no heed, and even went so far as to set aside the imposition of hands also. This, however, was soon restored by the Second Book of Discipline, set forth some twenty years thereafter. Yet were our reformers very considerate in their provisions for appointing ministers; none more so, perhaps none so much

so as they. And first, they reverence the call of the Holy Ghost, and require the gifts for each office to be sought for and found before any one should desire the office or be inducted thereinto: secondly, they require the call of the people after he hath made proof of his gifts before them: and thirdly, the examination and approbation of the ministers and elders of the Church: and finally, his admission by the preaching and prayer and exhortation of some godly minister before the people, without any signature of confession or formula, without the laying on of hands or any ceremony of whatever kind. If the church did not present a person so gifted to the neighbouring ministers for examination, which was the proper order, the ministers might present one unto the church, and require of the church to accept him if no good reason were found against him. This is the original constitution of the Scottish Church. There is no mention whatever of attendance at schools or universities for any term of years; and yet there is a strict proviso that the ministers should be learned as well as godly. And, in point of fact, the ministers of this period did as far surpass in learning, as they did in godliness, those who now study in the universities for eight years at the very least. When I look at the blessed liberty and godly order which Christ's Church had amongst us at the Reformation, and compare it with the bondage of forms, and the obstruction of times and circumstances, which now prevails, I am grieved at my heart, and cry out in the bitterness of my soul for some deliverance. The gifts of the Spirit for the office are not looked for by the presbyters, but certificates of professors, and petty attainments in literature and science, a smattering of everything, and of theology, that is, Calvinistic divinity, among the rest; and floods of such unspiritual, ungifted persons are poured upon the churches. And from these they must make their choice, or be without ministers altogether. This is clean contrary to the platform of our reformers, who gave the church the privilege not merely of calling from amongst those whom the ministers approved, but expected the church to choose out from among themselves fit persons for the examination and approbation of the

ministers and elders. This was the apostolical method, and the method of the early Church, and ought to be the method of every Church, and without it faithful ministers will never be obtained. The Holy Spirit's supremacy to divide the gifts according to His will, and His judgment, or discrimination expressed by the members of the Church, are prior to the approbation of the ministers and elders, with whom is deposited the power to invest and institute the person to that office, whatever it is, for which the Holy Ghost hath furnished, whereto the Church hath called him. I think the reformers were wrong in doing away with the act of laying on of the hands of the eldership, which is the sign of giving him the sanction of their authority; but it is a secondary thing compared with those great rights which they carefully preserved, and it was soon restored again. There is not, I believe, a more bold rejection of the Papistical impositions, nor yet a more reverent preservation of the apostolical ordinances, than is exhibited in this part of our church discipline; which is now not a dead letter merely, but a perverted ordinance. And what is the fruit of its perversion? Hundreds of preachers who have no heart to the work nor success in it; hungry hangers on, waiting for a bit of bread, instead of bold and fearless propagators of the gospel. I am one who feel the bondage of this system, and wait on Divine Providence for a call, and the work of the Spirit for a warrant, to restore to the Church its ancient liberty. And I believe that I shall not wait long. When it shall please the Holy Ghost to furnish men with gifts to fit them for apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, powers, helps, governments, discerners of spirits, speakers with tongues, and interpreters of tongues, I am prepared for my part, and will seek to shew to my brethren their duty to concur with me, in setting such apart, and sending them forth in their several charges. Meanwhile, we must keep what we have, be faithful over it, and wait for better things.

NOTE SECOND.—The other office-bearers were superintendents, but only for the present necessity, until the churches should be supplied with faithful and able ministers; after which the Church seems to have contemplated no superin-

tendence save that of the Provincial Synods and the General Assembly. Readers were men set to read the Scriptures, with a view to their growing up into the gift of explaining them, and exhorting the brethren; after which they might take upon them to administer the sacraments. For our reformers did well consider that the chief thing necessary for the holy office of ministering the sacraments, was the gift of explaining and applying the same. The gift of preaching they considered as the title to minister the sacraments; the laying on of hands as the appointment to power over that and the other ordinance in a particular place. And because the Papist priests did not minister any word of explanation and exhortation, their ordinances were held not to be rightly administered. And in this I heartily concur. This office of reader ought to be revived, in order that the Spirit might have liberty to draw out the gifts of His servants, and shew Himself in the Church, which at present He is entirely prevented from doing. Not a man may open his lips in a church of a thousand persons, save one only. What a shame! what a divergence from the primitive Church, and from the platform of our Reformed Church! Elders and deacons are required to be in every church, and many of each sort are contemplated; and lest the office should be burdensome, election is required annually. This was changed in the Second Book of Discipline, whereby the office was made perpetual; as doubtless it was intended to be, unless some fault requiring deposition should arise. The office of the deacon is now all but entirely disused in the Church of Scotland, through the shameful neglect of all discipline; and the office of an elder is little else than a name, or a lay-office. And yet we boast of our primitive simplicity, and have almost extinguished these two superior orders of the clergy. Better have an ordinance in any form, however altered, than have it altogether neglected or abolished. My wonder is, that the Church of Scotland, having swerved so far from her original foundation, and from the only true foundation of the word of God, should stand at all. It was said truly in the late debates, that by Acts of Parliament they stood, and that they might not, without forfeiture, make any alteration from the constitu-

tion by Act of Parliament established. And yet this is the Church which yielded up so many martyrs for Christ's royal office in His house!

NOTE THIRD.—There was an ordinance entitled, "The Prophesying or Interpreting of Scripture;" or, as it is called, "The Exercise," founded upon this passage, "Let the prophets speak, two or three, and let the others judge; but if anything be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the former keep silence. For ye may one by one all prophecy, that all may learn, and all may receive consolation. And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets." This exercise was to be weekly, to the end "that the kirk have judgment and knowledge of the graces, gifts, and utterances of every man within their body; the simple, and such as have somewhat profited, shall be encouraged daily to study and to prove in knowledge; and the whole kirk shall be edified: for this exercise must be patent to such as list to hear and learn, and every man shall have liberty to utter and declare his mind and knowledge to the comfort and consolation of the kirk." I ask, where is this ordinance now? It is sunk into disuetude. How earnestly bent the Church was upon this exercise, with additions, is declared in the following extract:—"And, moreover, men in whom is supposed to be any gift which might edify the Church, if they were well employed, must be charged by the minister and elders to join themselves with the session, and company of interpreters, to the end that the kirk may judge whether they be able to serve to God's glory, and to the profit of the kirk in the vocation of ministers or not: and if any be found disobedient, and not willing to communicate the gifts and special graces of God with their brethren, after sufficient admonition, discipline must proceed against them, provided that the civil magistrate concur with the judgment and election of the kirk. For no man may be permitted as best pleaseth him to live within the kirk of God, but every man must be constrained by fraternal admonition and correction to bestow his labours, when of the kirk he is required, to the edification of others. What day in the week is most convenient for that exercise, what books of Scripture shall be most profit-

able to read, we refer to the judgment of every particular kirk; we mean, to the wisdom of the minister and elders."—An ordinance of the like kind obtained in the Church of England, which, when Archbishop Parker was required by Queen Elizabeth to suppress, he preferred rather to lay down the primacy. I have no hesitation in saying, that, for want of this ordinance, the Holy Ghost hath been more grieved and quenched than by almost anything besides; and our church-meetings, from being for edification of the brethren by the Holy Ghost shewing Himself in the variously-gifted persons, have become merely places for preaching the gospel, and not for edifying the Church. No one feels more than I do the importance of public preaching, with which I would not interfere; but surely something is wanting besides this for the edification of the Church within itself. There are some vestiges of this ancient order in Ross-shire, under the name of "The day of the men," before the administration of the sacrament. To revive it, as our Churches are now constituted, would cause great confusion, and perhaps do more harm than good; but the same end might be served by elders gathering the people of their several districts together and presiding over such a holy exercise in their own houses, after the manner of fellowship-meetings. Something of this liberty must be permitted, or else the gifts of the Spirit will never be fully manifested. God help us to set this thing in order.

NOTE FOURTH.—There was a book of common order, according to which John Knox conducted his church in Edinburgh, and which was commonly adopted by others. This contained a set of prayers and offices for the common occasions of the Church, and our reformers were of opinion that there should be daily service in the church, either for sermon or common prayers, with some exercise of reading of Scriptures. It was required, moreover, that one day in every week there should be public worship with a sermon, during which there was to be cessation from business and labour, as well by servant as by master. The Lord's supper was to be administered at the least four times in the year. Public examination was to be had annually of the knowledge of

every person in the church; and a regular treatise of fasting for the Church was prepared by the General Assembly; and many other things which I cannot particularise, all of them betokening the life of the Church, as our present condition betokens her nighness unto death. What though, to countervail these blessed ordinances, there be in the First Book of Discipline some erroneous doctrine on the subject of the duty of the civil magistrate towards profaners of the holy sacraments, and of the name of God, as if such were not worthy to live; it is only one proof amongst many that there still did cleave unto the reformers some of the evil savour which their spirits had been baptized into by the accursed Papistry, as they term it. Upon the whole, therefore, take it for all in all, I admire the First Book of Discipline as a very mighty work of the Spirit of holiness and charity and good order. And I devoutly wish we had in our churches one half of the liberty and privilege which we are there required to use. I am much pressed in spirit upon this subject, and beseech the brethren to seek the Lord and set things in order.

IV. *The Second Book of Discipline.*

No one, who is not acquainted with the history of the Church of Scotland, can conceive the unwearied travail which his ancestors underwent between the years 1564 and the year 1581, in preparing the Second Book of Discipline, not with the view of superseding, but of perfecting the other; and though they prevailed not to obtain the ratification and legal enforcement thereof by the civil magistrate, it ought to be looked upon as by far the most deliberate and excogitated document, and almost the unanimous voice of our reformers upon the subject of Discipline. With the more diligence, therefore, let us consider wherein it adds to the correctness and completeness of the former.

NOTE FIRST.—While it is declared (chap. ii.) that three out of the five ministers of the word, namely, apostles, evangelists, and prophets, were extraordinary and temporary, it is not declared that they are done away with; but, contrariwise, that God "extraordinarily for a time may stir some of them up again." This comforts my mind, which can find in Scrip-

ture no hint of any withdrawal of the gifts and callings of God, but, on the other hand, a continual testimony that they are without repentance. And I do continually pray, both publicly and privately, that the Lord would restore such gifted persons to His Church for the perfecting of His saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. I think if ever a man had the gift of apostleship sealed upon him, it was Knox himself, whose labours and whose success are almost unprecedented in the annals of the Christian Church. And before him, in our land, the same may be said of Columba, the apostle of the Picts, and of Aidan, the apostle of the Northumbrians and Angles. And in the latter days I may say the same of Schwartz and Brainerd. I do not mean to place them, or any other men, by the side of the twelve apostles, who had from Christ the power of bringing the gift of the Holy Ghost into the Church by the laying on of hands. That faculty has ceased; gifts are now in the Church, and not in any order of men. But, because this viceregal function hath ceased, we may not, without warrant of Scripture, say that the apostolic office hath ceased; and as to the prophetic office, I believe it to be in the Church at this day, exercised and practised by those persons who have received the gift of tongues. To the doctrine, that they have been withdrawn by any act of God, I can never subscribe: to the fact that they have not been apparent, I confess with shame and confusion of face; to the hope that they are all reviving and will soon be all manifested, I cleave with strong assurance. And for this I call upon all Christians to pray. Even common parlance hath denominated Bernard Gilpin the apostle of the North, and St Patrick the apostle of Ireland: and I hope to see the day when not ecclesiastical courts, of which we hear nothing in Scripture save for emergencies, but persons apostolical, evangelical, prophetical, pastoral, and doctrinal, shall rule over the word of God.

NOTE SECOND.—The rule over the word is committed to the pastor, and doctor or teacher: of which orders there should be one in every church; the former to take the cure of souls, the latter to travail in the word; the one to ad-

minister consolation, edification, exhortation, word, and sacrament; the other to wait on teaching, and doctrine, and catechising. The elders have no part nor lot in this matter, to whom belongeth government or discipline; to the deacon, gathering and distribution of the goods ecclesiastical. This division of offices is, I think, sound, and it were well for every church that it were faithfully observed. The office of doctor or teacher hath failed, and where it still remains in the collegiate churches, it is not according to the ordinance, but merely as a second minister. I have lived to see it revived, and to preside over the revival of it, in the person of one, whom the General Assembly cast out without permitting him a trial by the Holy Scriptures; and whom, therefore, I consider as a sufferer for righteousness' sake. May the Lord speedily revive this office in all the churches.

NOTE THIRD.—These four offices of pastor, doctor, elder, and deacon, without which the reformers consider no church rightly constituted, are all put upon the same footing in respect of admission; three things being necessary: First, the calling of God and inward testimony of a good conscience: secondly, election by the judgment of the eldership, and consent of the congregation; none to be intruded contrary to the will of the congregation, or without the voice of the eldership: thirdly, ordination by fasting, earnest prayer, and imposition of hands of the eldership. All this I deem to be well ruled; but I dissent from a limitation put upon the call of God in these words: "There are two sorts of calling; one extraordinary, by God immediately, as was that of the prophets and apostles, which, in kirks established and already well reformed, hath no place." Until I see authority for this in the word of God, I must regard it as a hasty conclusion drawn from a low and faithless estate of the Church, and which, if permitted to remain, will perpetuate that estate. I believe that the call of God is neither more nor less than the gift of the Holy Ghost for that particular office; which, being received by any one, he exerciseth before the church, and the church, discriminating the nature and experiencing the edification thereof, doth ask him to be by the proper authority of the eldership instated in that office; which being accom-

plished, everything is done to preserve the invisible Head, the visible government, and the whole Church, in their several rights and immunities. The invisible Head acts in the spirit of the person by the Holy Ghost, working in him a certain power of teaching, miracles, tongues, wisdom, knowledge, or otherwise: the whole Church recogniseth this, and are thankful, and they wait upon their rulers with their wishes, who, giving heed thereto, and being well satisfied therewith, do straightway institute him in his office. This, I feel assured, is the completeness of the rule. It is very remarkable that *the word of wisdom* and *the word of knowledge*, which are manifestations of the Holy Ghost, (1 Cor. xii.,) should be assigned as the gifts which severally qualify for the offices of the *pastor* and the *doctor*. Our reformers were right in the substance; they were led astray merely by the use of that distinction, extraordinary and ordinary, for which I cannot find a shadow of authority in the Scripture.

NOTE FOURTH.—As in the church of Jerusalem, Antioch, or Ephesus, those elders who ruled in the word, and those who ruled in the discipline, might and did meet together for the well-ordering of all things within the church, and for sending out men, as Paul and Barnabas, to see how the other churches fared, and to water them, yea, and to plant churches where none already were; so our fathers, looking reverently to apostolic authority, did ordain likewise; and the assembly so convening they called the presbytery or eldership: for there is no mention in the Second Book of Discipline of a kirk-session as distinct from a presbytery. But, on the contrary, the assemblies of the Church are declared to be "of four sorts; for either they are of particular kirks and congregations, one or mo, (more,) or of a province, or of a whole nation, or of all and divers nations professing one Jesus Christ." The first of these is as complete in one congregation as in more; the former being the rule, the latter the exception; as is set forth in these words: "When we speak of the elders of the particular congregations, we mean not that every particular parish kirk can, or may, have their own particular elderships, especially in landward; but we think three, four, more or fewer particular kirks, may have one eldership, common to them all,

to judge their ecclesiastical causes." Accordingly, in the towns all the ministers and elders did convene together as it is at this day: and this is the true idea of the presbytery or eldership; being in truth derived from the order of the seven Apocalyptic Churches, and of the primitive Culdee colleges; as is distinctly set forth in these words: "This we gather out of the practice of the primitive kirk, where elders, or colleges of seniors, were constitute in cities and famous places." Now, to have copied the model, there should have been not a moderator elected at every meeting, but a permanent *angel*, (to use the Scripture expression,) or a *bishop*, (to use the expression of the primitive Church,) or an *antistes*, (abbot, superior, to use the style by which the Culdees expressed the same truth.) I maintain, therefore, that a church with its minister, one or more; its doctor, one or more; its elders and its deacons, is complete within itself for all purposes whatsoever, either of self-preservation or of propagation: and that the presbytery mentioned in Scripture, and in our Books of Discipline, consisted of the eldership of such a church, and I do feel in this respect perfect liberty, acting as the head of the eldership of a church, to do all the acts to which a bishop in the Church of England or a presbytery in the Church of Scotland feel themselves to be competent. Moreover, I feel assured that it is the duty of every church so to act. And this is the ordinary jurisdiction; provincial synods, and national assemblies, and œcumenical councils being extraordinary, to meet emergencies.

V. *Craig's Catechism.*

The next official and authoritative document of the Church of Scotland which we have republished, is entitled, "A Form of Examination before the Communion," drawn up by Mr John Craig, and commonly called Craig's Catechism. It was drawn up by order of the General Assembly, read in their hearing, in the meeting 1592, and by them publicly approved, and ordered to be used in all the churches. My reverence for the authority of the Church, as well as my own high satisfaction in this little catechism, first moved me to use it in my own church for examination of communicants; and finding it so very advantageous, I resolved to republish it at my own

charges; and doing this, I thought it would not be unseasonable to publish along with it the other ancient documents of our Church, which now are hardly known, save to a few men of antiquarian research;—insomuch that lately, in a meeting of synod, all appeal to them was ridiculed, as if one should talk of the vitrified forts of Scotland.

Anterior to this time, our Church, in that loving spirit of fraternity, of which we have noted another instance, did receive the Catechism of the Genevan Church, commonly called Calvin's Catechism, and also the Palatinate Catechism. There was also the little Catechism for young persons before communion, and the Latin Catechism used in schools. Nor were these ever annulled, but continue to this day symbols of that faith upon which our Church was founded. I had thoughts of reprinting these four Catechisms, but preferred the Larger Catechism of the Westminster Divines, in testimony of my reverence for the labours of that Assembly, and because it is so very ample and sufficient upon all points of doctrine and practice. With respect to Craig's Catechism, I have nothing to say, except that it is a most precious depository of vital truth, and, with one alteration, the best Catechism I know. The grounds of this judgment I will now express.

NOTE FIRST.—It hath an advantage over the Shorter Catechism, in being so entirely divested of a systematic form, and being expressed almost entirely in Scripture terms. Each question and answer generally contain one simple truth, with one text of Scripture to confirm it. And it is so much shorter than the Assembly's Catechism, that I almost wish it might supplant it both in families and schools. Besides, the whole subject of our union with Christ, and our deriving nourishment from Him in the way of life, sorely overlooked in the Shorter Catechism, is in this excellently set forth. The Shorter Catechism is systematic; Craig's Catechism is scriptural and simple. The Shorter Catechism is intellectual; Craig's Catechism is vital.

NOTE SECOND.—The subjects of our bondage through Adam, and our redemption by Christ, are treated of as altogether independent upon our participation with Christ, as mysteries of the faith outward to us, done in God for all, and

by us to be believed on, anterior to, and in order to, our coming into the participation thereof. Then that participation through union with Christ by faith, is beautifully opened; and faith is defined to be "a sure persuasion that He is the only Saviour of the world, but ours in special who believe in Him." Here is the common redemption, the particular appropriation, and assurance combined together in the definition of faith. Would one believe that the men who cast out the Rev. John Campbell are the successors of those men who sanctioned this catechism?

NOTE THIRD.—There is somewhat of indistinctness in the fifth section, of which the first question, "What good things may we do now, being regenerated?" is well answered, "We may serve our God freely and uprightly." But the following question, "May we do it perfectly according to the law?" is, if I understand it right, erroneously answered, "No, truly; for our regeneration is not perfect:" and I say so, because it is expressly written, "That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," (Rom. viii. 3.) This inaccuracy leads to one or two more, all arising out of one or other of these two notions, that it is sinful to have temptations in the flesh, or that regeneration is not good against those temptations, utterly to triumph over them. Now, the truth is, that to have the law of the flesh is indeed one part of our original sin, from which we are delivered by Christ's perfect conformity to the law; as we are delivered from the power of death by His resurrection. But the presence of this law of the flesh is no impediment to the holiness of the regenerate man, regeneration being a power of God, able to triumph over it, and to be holy against all its temptations. I would not be the means of publishing what may have the remotest chance of conveying error; and therefore I would alter Questions 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, in this way:—

Q. 37. May we serve God freely, and uprightly, and perfectly, according to the law?—*A.* Yea, truly; because the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, (Rom. viii. 3.)

Q. 38. What followeth upon that?—*A.* A continual cruci-

fixion of the flesh, with its corruptions and lusts, and living unto God by the power of the Holy Ghost, (Rom. vii.)

Q. 39. Is the presence of the law of the flesh in our members to be accounted sin?—*A.* No surely, while we serve it not, but do ever gainsay and overcome it, (1 Pet. iv. 1.)

Q. 40. Whence hast thou assurance of this continual victory over the flesh?—*A.* From the spiritual generation, holy life, and spotless death of Christ, notwithstanding He was bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh.

Q. 41. What are we then who believe in Christ?—*A.* Just in Him, and ever deriving from Him the will, and the way, and the power to be holy, as He is holy, (1 John iii. 6, 7.)

Q. 42. How is this?—*A.* Through a constant faith in Christ, and crucifixion and burial of the natural man.

The reformers were so intent, upon the one hand, to establish Christ's righteousness, as the only fountainhead of righteousness, and, on the other, the liberty to come at once and be saved by faith in the same, without the works of the law, that they did not give themselves so strenuously as they should have done to define and maintain holiness in the believer as the continual requirement of God, which Christ enabled him to fulfil. They looked at Christ's righteousness for the chief of sinners, as a thing to bring us at once into acceptance with God, and to set us up in a clear conscience: they did not consider it also as a continual sustenance in the same state of acceptance, through the preservation of the conscience clean. They spake of the virtue of Christ's blood to cleanse the conscience at all times, but not of the power of Christ's resurrection to uphold us in perfect obedience and purest holiness at all times. It was an omission, not an error; though, as in the case before us, it betrayed them into forms of doctrine highly pernicious to holiness, and which have now wrought out the heresy, that to say Christ had the law of the flesh is to say He had sin. I wish, instead of the word *imputed*, were continually substituted *inherent, but derived.* Though the Catechism comes short in this statement of the Creed, it is always right in the spirit of its faith; and upon the subject of the sacraments it is altogether admirable.

VI. *The National Covenant.*

Concerning this document, we have to observe, that it consisteth of two parts. These are, properly speaking, not ecclesiastical, but national, emanating not from the Church but from the State. The Confession itself is one of the most nervous protestations against the Papacy that was ever penned; in which, amongst other things, "his desperate and uncertain repentance, his general and doubtsome faith," are condemned along with his other abominations. Now, this is exactly what has been recently approved by the General Assembly, who have condemned the true doctrine as the height of presumption, and the root of Antinomianism. The latter part contains a succession of acts and statutes, confirming the above Confession, the Coronation Oath, and other muniments of the kingdom, for which the people of all ranks and estates declare themselves willing to live and die. Whether it was right for the nation to do this in the face and without the consent of their king, and in the strength of it to defend themselves against their king, is a question which began to be agitated both in England and in Scotland, and in all other lands, at the time of the Reformation. And I have no hesitation in saying, that both Knox and Buchanan took up erroneous doctrine on this subject, in maintaining that the king of a Christian people might be lawfully resisted by his Christian people, when violating the laws and constitutions of the kingdom, and trampling under foot the oaths and covenants whereby he had bound himself. The principle of *Lex rex*, The law the king, is essentially an erroneous one, inasmuch as it makes the supremacy to stand in a book, and not in a person, and diverteth the ordinance from the ordinance-administrator, and from the ordinance-head. It is by persons, not by truths, that God is glorified; and persons, not truths, doth He ordain for the government of His creatures; and the truth was never perfected until it appeared in the person of the Son of God, who said of Himself, I am the truth. Buchanan's treatise, "De Jure regni apud Scotos," and Knox's "First Blast of the Trumpet against the monstrous Regiment of Women," contain essentially false doctrine upon the subject

of obedience to the powers that be, which hath wrought like a leaven in the Church and realm of Scotland, and may yet exhibit that country as the most formidable seat of radicalism and rebellion in the world. The jealous government of Elizabeth, the sage counsels of her statesmen, and the deep insight and reverence of the English reformers, resisted the same spirit insinuating itself into England, and drew up one of their Articles in distinct and explicit reprobation of it. Driven back by their measures, it sunk down into the deep and secret parts of the nation, and wrought there until it found a head among the Independents, and produced the fury and havoc of the Commonwealth, and remains securely seated amongst that body until this day, waiting occasion to manifest itself: nor will it wait long; its day of manifestation and perdition is just at hand. Ah me! it was a sad thing that the reformers took the civil arm so much into their service. Had they been content to teach their duties to kings as well as to all other men, and left them to the noble liberty of the servants of Christ Jesus, to give and to grant what charters and immunities they pleased to the Church and the people, and taught the people to hold these as boons during the good pleasure of their rulers, and to resign them when Providence required it, looking for a heavenly inheritance; then the Reformation, instead of being the cradle of insurrection and civil war, of free-thinking and liberalism, as it hath proved, would have been the cradle of witness and martrydom for the faith and hope of the Lord's coming.

While I make these allowances and abatements from the excellent work of reformation in general, I must say for the reformers in Scotland, and their successors, the covenanters, that they were most disinterested, noble-minded, humble and patient sufferers for the cross of Christ, though in this point they wanted light. They thought that when the sixth James had sealed to the excellence of the Church of Scotland, before assuming the English crown, and when the second Charles had done the same by the Covenant, they might be lawfully resisted, if afterwards they should resile from, and act contrary to, their obligations. Which is to make the definition and dignity of the royal office to be not of Divine ordination, but

of human agreement; and to bring in the doctrine of the social compact, and the rights of the people, whose natural fruit is revolution and destruction of all social relations whatever. It is as if a Mohammedan wife having become Christian, should work upon her husband to become Christian also; and so enjoy the privileges of a Christian wife; and afterwards, because her husband fell back into Mohammedanism, should resist him and refuse obedience to his commandments: or, as if children should obey the father while he was tender and kind, but throw off their dutifulness when he became rough and stern and wicked: or, as if servants should serve only the gentle master, and refuse obedience to the froward: whereas the Scripture doctrine is to obey all ordinances of man for the Lord's sake. The relation of king and subject, of husband and wife, of parent and child, of master and servant, are older than Christianity, which came to comfort and mollify and redeem them from all evil, not to destroy and subvert them. When they are righteously exercised, let us be obedient and give thanks; when they are wrongously exercised, let us be obedient and rejoice that we are counted worthy to suffer with Christ; who, when He was reviled, reviled not again, when He suffered, He threatened not, but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously. —It was noble in the ejected ministers to betake themselves to the mountains, and to wander about in sheep skins and goat skins, and to have their habitation in dens of the earth, "of whom the world was not worthy;" but it was wrong in them to take arms, or to permit the people to take arms, against the most ravenous and wicked of the spoilers of the land. They should have taken joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing they have in heaven a better and a more enduring substance. It is not a question of casuistry, it is a question of plain and direct Christian morality. I hold without a doubt, that in this matter of resistance our fathers were wrong.

But should they have obeyed the king, and observed his ordinances in respect to things ecclesiastical; as, for example, in having these beggarly curates who were thrust in upon the Church, instead of their right godly pastors? No, not for a moment. The king of Great Britain had as little right to

interfere in the Church of Scotland, as king Uzziah had to interfere in the temple service. It was beyond his ordinance. He could not dissever a pastor from his people, whom God had joined together in one. And I would have died a hundred deaths rather than have allowed any power on earth to dissolve that sacred relationship. What then? The pastors must preach to their people; and the king's hirelings must have their hire. But if the king will not suffer the people to hear their pastors? Then the people must obey God rather than the king. No king, no husband, no father, no master, hath liberty or power to make one of God's creatures do wrong; that is what no servant of God can require; and inasmuch as any ostensible office-bearer of God doth so require, he is a real and efficient servant of the devil, who is the author and instigator of all wrong.—But is not this resistance? Yea; resistance unto blood. But resistance for what sake? For conscience sake. Not for the sake of rights political, nor properly terrestrial, but for the kingdom of heaven's sake: not resistance with weapons of the flesh, but with spiritual weapons, which are the girdle of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the helmet of salvation, the shield of faith, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, and the continual strength of prayer. Now, because the chief labour and persecution and death of the Covenanters was of this kind, patient suffering for righteousness sake, God did so abundantly countenance the work, and by such wonderful providences did bring it out triumphantly: so that I can glory in it as a great work of God, though I disapprove the ostensible creed which they gave out upon this subject of resistance, believing it to be the beginnings of that insubordination and revolution which now filleth Christendom. It was a root of bitterness which hath grown up and troubled the flock, whereby many, almost all, have been destroyed. The principle is, We must give up all the world contains for Christ willingly, yea joyfully; but Christ we must not give up for all the world contains;—a truth which I am the more patient to inculcate, because there is hardly a man, save those who are looking for His coming, who believe it, and who is not ready at any time to act against it.

VII. *The Directory for Family Worship.*

While, with that single exception of a false opinion, rather than a false faith, I do heartily approve and greatly commend, yea, and glory in, the wrestlings of the Church of Scotland during almost a whole century of grievous opposition and persecution from the powers that be, I am still more delighted and rejoiced by the unwearied care with which she gave herself to cultivate amongst the people the seeds of vital religion, and to order the whole kingdom after a godly sort. One of these breathing times of rest she enjoyed between the great assembly of 1638, and the restoration of Charles II. in 1660; and notwithstanding that the Presbyterians of Scotland were agitated by so many wars, first with the Royalists, and then with the Independents, the Church did address herself with so much faith and patience to the work of evangelising and edifying the people, that it was like a second reformation to the land, and raised up a generation capable of enduring the furnace of persecution which was seven times heated during the thirty years following. One of the instruments by which the spiritual husbandry was carried on, is exhibited to us in the next of the documents, which we have thought it good to republish. It is entitled, "The Directory for Family Worship," and was agreed upon by the General Assembly in the year 1647, and enjoined upon the observation of all the people. I earnestly commend it to all families, especially to the families of my own flock, with one or two remarks proper to our condition in the heart of a great city.

NOTE FIRST.—The caution given (Section III.) against any one, however otherwise qualified, taking upon him the interpretation of the Scriptures, unless he be duly called thereto by God and the Church, is very wholesome and safe; provided it be not carried to the extent of preventing the head of the family, or the conductor of the worship, from his proper function as the instructor and counsellor of the family, which the former hath in right of his baptismal engagements, the latter hath delegated to him as the leader of the worship and the reader of the word. For, while interpretation is interdicted to all but those who are appointed to rule in the word

and doctrine, it is declared to be a commendable thing, that all confer, and make a good use of what has been read. The Church opens the mouth of the heads of families to everything but trespassing upon the office of the minister of the word, permitting exhortation against sin, warning of judgment, application of the promises for comfort, and enforcement of the duties; and, in general, pressing home of the things which have been read. Moreover, it is very clear from Section VIII., that while the Church requireth all her people to be subject unto those who rule in the word, and not to meddle with their office, it doth expect that all heads of families should give reverent heed to what is delivered in the congregation, and break down the same to their families afterwards. And if to their families they be required to hold forth the interpretations, doctrines, counsels, and instructions which have been held forth to them in the church, then surely to other families and companies of ignorant people who may dwell beside them, far from the means of grace, and the knowledge of the true God. In a country like Scotland, which was all supplied with ministers of the word, this case needeth not to be provided for; but in a great city like London, over the families of which there are no efficient pastors, insomuch that not one family in a hundred can be considered as so conditioned, it surely is permitted to any godly person to go forth from the congregation among the ignorant and perishing people, and do whatever he can to convey to them the instruction which he hath himself received through the ministration of the word. I have seen too much the evil of unproved men taking upon them to interpret the word with authority, to desire that any of the congregation should break loose from the wholesome restraint here laid down; while I devoutly desire, nay, and enjoin it as a duty upon every one who has time and opportunity, without neglecting his own duties, to go forth and communicate the substance of that instruction which he hath heard and learned, and felt to be profitable to his own soul. The spirit of the caution is, "Do not take upon you to originate, but be at all pains to convey and communicate the interpretations which you have received through the ordinance of preaching. Be not many masters or preachers in the word, but be all communicators

of the gift and grace which you have freely received. Freely ye have received, freely give."

NOTE SECOND.—Persons of quality (Section IV.) are encouraged to entertain in their families persons approved by the presbytery for performing family exercises, and taking a spiritual charge of the household. I do greatly desire and continually pray that such families in our great cities, as can afford it, would entertain in their houses young men who have separated themselves to the preaching of the gospel, that they may go in and out amongst the ignorant all the day long, and endeavour to bring the gospel to the ears of the people, who are living as remote from it as if they had their habitation in the heart of the Arabian desert. And I give it as my opinion, that if God by His grace should stir up in the congregation young men, who were willing to forsake all for preaching the gospel, and to submit their gifts to the inspection of the minister who rules in the word, with the consent of the eldership, that such a one might be lawfully set apart to the office, and might be profitably entertained by the heads of families in the flock to evangelise this heathenish city; and, if he desired it, might, yea, and ought to be sent into the villages round about, and into other nations, to the very ends of the earth. And I feel assured that the work of God will never be rightly done, while it is under the power of the unwieldy mechanism which is now brought to bear upon it. The General Assembly's Mission, as they call it, is the proof of what I say. I feel assured that this state of bondage cannot last; and that if God's people pray diligently, deliverance will soon come.

NOTE THIRD.—In Section XII. of this Directory are contained instructions and injunctions concerning the work of mutual edification among the members of the body of Christ, out of which grew the fellowship-meetings and prayer-meetings, once so frequent throughout Scotland, and so profitable to the rearing up of men for the offices of the Church. In them the Spirit began to shew Himself, and the report was borne to the minister, who straightway took order that such a gifted person should be rightly trained up for the work of the ministry. Here also were the gifts for the eldership mani-

fested, and for the other offices in the Church. All this work of edifying the flock is now cast upon the minister, who, if he be faithful, hath too heavy a burden, and, if faithless, then the whole edification of the parish is shipwrecked during his incumbency. It is apparent from the whole scope of the direction, that, by this vitality of the whole body, the Church expected that the body should be nourished, and that the pastor's part lay in superintending and overseeing the whole scene of religious activity. I thank God that I begin to see the same work of mutual edification beginning to revive in my flock; and I pray that it may grow up into that perfection which is set forth in the Epistle to the Ephesians: "From whom" (Christ, the Head) "the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body into the edifying of itself in love."

VIII. *Overtures of General Assembly*, A.D. 1705.

Concerning this document, of which I have never been able to find another copy than that from which this is reprinted, I can find no further information than what is contained in a printed Act of Assembly 1704, and an Act of the Assembly 1705, not printed, but noticed in the list of unprinted Acts. The twenty-fifth Act of Assembly 1704, is entitled "An Act anent preparing a Form of Process, and the Overtures concerning Church Discipline;" whereby a committee is appointed to prepare the same, and transmit them to the presbyteries for their approval against the next Assembly, which is "to order what is to be done therewith, as they shall think meet." Among the list of unprinted Acts of the Assembly 1705, session 3, is this notice: "Recommendation anent buying the Overtures for Discipline, which are reprinted according to the twenty-fifth Act of the late Assembly." Not having access to the Assembly Records, I am not able to say whether the presbyteries had approved these overtures, so as to give them the force of positive laws, but do suppose so from the tenor of the recommendation. However this may be, I have thought it good to reprint them for several reasons.

This document, bearing date 1705, exhibits the mind of the Church on the subject of discipline at the beginning of her last period, the period of her freedom from persecution, which began at the Revolution. There is a great declension from the period between the famous Assembly at Glasgow 1638, and the Restoration in 1660, and still a greater declension from the brightest period of our Reformed Church from 1560 to 1610. The Acts of Assembly from the Revolution, which begins this last period, I have read with great care, and cannot but lament how the gold is become dim, and the fine gold changed, from the time of the First and Second Books of Discipline. There is a hard legal spirit, a character of business transactions, a hiding of principles, whether doctrinal or ecclesiastical, and in general an unlearned character, which bespeak the Church fast falling from the catholic spirit of the universal Church into the minute details of a body incorporated by Acts of Parliament. One cannot but admire the diligence to plant Scotland with churches, and to take order for the good government of the whole kingdom. The Assembly is fulfilling its duty to the king and the country faithfully, so far as details and regulations go; but its duty to the great Head of the Church, to preach the gospel to every creature under heaven, it is overlooking very much. That spirit of legal formality, of lifeless order, is growing, which is now consummated, like a huge system of agricultural labour, without any sowing of seed, or propitiating of the dews of heaven. Plenty of management, but neither seed to sow, nor rain to moisten the earth. And, accordingly, so early as the Assembly 1720, we find the spirit of formality beginning to act against the spirit of doctrine in the matter of the Marrow controversy; which hath gone on with a progressive course until this year, when it hath prevailed to trample all doctrine triumphantly under foot, both the doctrine of the Father's love to all men, of Christ's incarnation in the flesh of all men, of the Holy Ghost's working assurance in them who believe;—yea, and hath made the Confession of Faith, and not the Scriptures, the book of ultimate appeal; and hath condemned a book without exhibiting propositions of error, and placed its author under stigma of heresy without once citing him, or permitting

him a hearing. Of which the like was not done by the Councils either of Constance or of Trent. There wanteth further but one other decree, to bring these Acts to bear upon those who are seeking to enter the ministry, and upon those who are seeking sealing ordinances, in order to lock the Church as fast in apostasy as Rome hath been since the decrees of Trent were embodied in the Creed of Pope Pius IV. And even this was attempted last Assembly, first by the overture of one evangelical doctor, and then by the motion of another. Oh, how little these poor forsaken men know what they do!

Nevertheless, I have deemed it good to exhibit the form of the mind of the Church at the beginning of the last century, that men may take it up and compare it with the present state of the poor Church of Scotland, "blind, miserable, and naked;" abounding in ignorance and pride, in formality and error, destitute, or almost so, of unction, orthodoxy, and charity.

NOTE FIRST.—The first six sections respect the kirk-session, which is composed of the minister, the doctor, the elders, the deacons, and the clerk or scribe or recorder of each church; permitting thereto the ordering of everything concerning the word and the sacraments and the discipline, in which the vitality of a Church consisteth. It answereth to the angel and the elders of the apostolical times, the bishop and the clergy of the primitive Church, the bishop and the elders of the Culdee churches. And though the presbytery hath now acquired a distinct and separate existence, which it had not according to the First and Second Books of Discipline, it is only a court of delegates from the several kirk-sessions within its bounds, having no conformity with any primitive institution, and being intended only for the supervision of the several churches in order to preserve unity; not to usurp any of their prerogatives, or to supersede aught of their jurisdiction. This is a most important remark, because it hath come to be not only opinion but also doctrine, that the presbytery, and not the kirk-session, is the thing written of in Scripture under the name πρησβυτερον, and in our symbolical books under the name eldership. So also I find in the Church of England that the bishops have contrived to get into their

sole hands the power and dignity which belong to the parish clergy. This I steadily resist as an imposition. The kirk-session wanteth nothing to give it full power to do every act which pertaineth to a church; it is a complete responsible depositary of the authority of the great Head of the Church. And so far as I can understand it, the presbytery is instead of the superintendent; and the superintendent is a sort of relic of the apostle or evangelist. The synod is the old provincial council of bishops and presbyters. The General Assembly is the national one. But what this presbytery is more than the eldership of any church I cannot see, unless it be for doing by means of a court what was originally done by the apostle or evangelist; as they say in civil affairs, the putting of that personal right into commission until its proper owners shall appear. I hope the Holy Ghost will soon seal some men to the apostolical and evangelical office, and that the court of delegated commissioners will then resign their trust.

NOTE SECOND.—Let not the former remark be understood as intending anything against the presbytery, but as advancing the eldership of each church, the kirk-session, into its proper dignity. For, as hath been set forth above, while I believe that every church or communion of the faithful, under its eldership and its angel, is fully competent to, and altogether responsible for, the fulness of the Holy Ghost to do and to suffer, to preserve and to propagate the faith, I do likewise believe that to unite these churches under their several pastors and doctors into one, there is an ordinance of God sacred and essential to the completeness of the Church, as the one body of Christ; namely, the ordinance of apostles and evangelists, who were as it were the bands and joints which linked and bound the many churches or memberships of Christ's body into one. For while every church hath an organic life within itself, to make increase of the body in love, all the churches do form one body, for the manifestation of the unity of the Spirit of Jesus Christ: and in holding this point the Presbyterians and Episcopalians have the advantage of the Independents; while these again have somewhat the advantage of us in maintaining, at least practically, better than we do,

the completeness of each church within itself; this intercommunion of church with church throughout the whole world was preserved by an ordinance of the Spirit, which, like all His ordinances, standeth in gifted persons, not in ecclesiastical courts. "When He ascended up on high, He gave *some* (not *to some*) apostles, some evangelists, some prophets, some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." Now, the persons who bound the churches into one, were the apostles and evangelists. How these two were distinguised from each other I stay not to examine particularly; but my notion is, that the apostle planted churches, the evangelist watered the churches which had been already planted. Neither of these was the episcopal office, and to mix them up with the bishop, or the overseer, or the angel of a church, is to confuse things entirely distinct. This has been done in some measure in the Church of England; and in the Church of Scotland it was done also in the superintendent. These institutions are good, are better than the presbytery, inasmuch as they preserve the *personal* character of these bands and joints of the churches; but not so good, inasmuch as they confuse the vocation and the gift and office of the pastor with the higher calling of the apostle or evangelist, which the presbytery doth not. But the way of a presbytery is worse than the way of a bishop or superintendent, inasmuch as it hath drawn away from each church its independent and indefeasible completeness, and made the same to stand in a confederacy of some half dozen or even score of churches, meeting once a month by delegation; which is a nonentity in the Scriptures, and a solecism in ecclesiastical polity, and not authorised by our reformers, and hath crept into use by the spirit of formality. As hath been said above, I look upon the presbytery as a body of commissioners holding the office of the apostleship or evangelist *in commendam* until fit *persons* for taking it in charge be raised up by the Holy Spirit;—a time which I believe to be near at hand.

Nevertheless, I am exceedingly pleased with the instructions given to presbyteries in these overtures on discipline, as exhibiting a very beautiful and complete view of the constitution

and occupation of these bodies, which makes me blush with shame upon every remembrance of what I have witnessed in the present goings-on of presbyteries. The matter is digested into two chapters, which are the seventh and eighth; whereof the former treateth of the "method of proceeding," the latter of the "parochial visitations." They ought to meet every third week, but in the first and second periods of the Church, when the idea of presbytery was the eldership of each church, or the collected eldership of one or two contiguous congregations or churches, and not a delegation from the several elderships, they were required to meet every week. They were to be opened by one of the brethren *exercising* or *making* upon a text after the manner of the doctor, and *adding* after the manner of the pastor; to qualify us for which excellent ordinance we are required when students of divinity to write such an exercise with additions. This being finished, the presbytery proceeded to *censure* or give their judgment upon the exercise; and thereafter they held a public disputation upon some common head of doctrine every first presbytery of the month. They then were to proceed to the work of examining the gifts of those who sought office in the Church, and of ordaining them to their several charges; and after this they sat as a court of appeal, to hear any causes of discipline, and to heal any breaches, which the several churches had not been able to settle within themselves.—In all this I perceive a very godly ordinance, as unlike that which now passeth under the name as well can be; and likewise I discern a relic of the old apostolic power which Paul exercised of gathering the elders of the church together and giving them a charge, which is also kept up in the episcopal visitations of the Church of England: likewise of the angel's power over the several congregations or churches in any city, like Ephesus for example: but I can find no authority for dispensing with a constant head, and adopting in stead thereof a changing moderator. There is something surely uncanonical in this ordinance; which I have no doubt hath come from the presbytery regarding itself in the light of a synodical court. It is a strange mixture of synodical, personal, and congregational rights, which I cannot justify, though I can thus shew the fountains of

the several jurisdictions.—The laying on of hands for authority, is an assumption of that which belongs to the angel and eldership of each church; the visitation of the churches is a right derived from the apostolical office; and perhaps the exercising upon a passage of Scripture from the evangelist; and certainly the sitting as a court of review with an elective moderator, is derived from the provincial synod.—The eighth section, entitled "Of Parochial Visitations by the Presbytery," opens more light into the state of the Church at these times, compared with its present state, than whole volumes could do. I do recommend it to the perusal of all persons in the Church of Scotland, as fitted by God's blessing to do away with that vain confidence and self-sufficiency which hath swallowed up all humiliation and confession of sin, and brought every man from being a mourner for the corruptions of our Zion, to be a champion, and too often a bully, for everything, the very worst, which is there found smelling rank to heaven and crying for vengeance.—The ninth, "Of Visitation of Families," the tenth, "Of Sanctification of the Lord's Day, and observing Fast and Thanksgiving-Days," are all full of the odour of sanctity, and contain most wise precautions against the growth of wickedness in the Church. Whence then the present distress? From the shepherds, from the unfaithfulness of the administrators to these excellent ordinances, who have gradually let them drop out of use, and out of mind, until they have become a dead letter, or are revived, as in the case of the visitation of the parish of Row, in order to convert the salutary rod of discipline into a sceptre of iron for dashing out the brains of faithful ministers. The universities, and above all the University of Edinburgh, where the ministers of the Church are reared; the abuse of patronage; the self-seeking of the heads of corporations, and the public functionaries, or, as they might be called, factionaries of Scotland; the secularity of the Church courts, the growth of a legal spirit, the miserable state of preaching for three quarters of a century, have made the well-watered and fruitful garden of Scotland to become a spiritual waste, her presbyteries to become business and convivial meetings, or scenes of low and vulgar strife; her kirk-sessions to become almost non-

entities; the order of deacons to be abolished; the office of priest or elder to be prostituted to the vilest interests; and all things, in one word, from the preaching of the gospel downward, to become a sore and grievous evil in the sight of God; which, if not repented of, will bring down His wrath and indignation upon that whole land like a whirlwind. Of all this evil, I impute the chief and almost only blame to the shepherds, who, having such admirable canons of discipline, all and every one of which they bound themselves to observe, have fallen into the grossest ignorance with respect to them, and are at this day found living in the utter neglect, yea, and contempt of them all; which things I speak plainly, because the poor people are blinded,—and sorrowfully, because I would move compassion in the heart of the people, that they may cry unto God for their mother, and find help for her in His tender mercy, which endureth for ever.

IX. *The Westminster Assembly's Larger Catechism.*

In this historical enumeration of the authorised documents of the Church of Scotland, I have refrained from noticing the Confession of Faith and Catechisms of the Westminster Divines, which were examined and approved by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in the year 1648. And this I have done because the Church of Scotland had to do with them not directly but indirectly. It is true we had some half-dozen Commissioners in that Assembly of Divines; but the great body were Puritan ministers of the Church of England, assembled not by warrant of the king, but of the Long Parliament, when, by common consent, the constitution of this kingdom was under abeyance. It was essentially an issue of republican and revolutionary principles. I never liked that Assembly, and would much rather our Church had never adopted its books. As it is, however, we must bow to the awards of Providence, and make the best use of them. While I prefer beyond all measure the labours of our reformers, which took so many years to complete them, and grieve exceedingly that they should have been virtually supplanted and buried out of sight by the Act of one General

Assembly, in a factious time convened; without any observance of the Barrier Act, which requireth every Act of legislature to pass slowly and patiently through the presbyteries; —while, I say, I lament this other instance of Scottish haste I am far from disavowing the Westminster Confession, to which I have set my hand, or even disallowing it as an excellent composition upon the whole. But for many reasons I greatly postpone it to our original standards; under which it ranks, and is subordinated, not they under it. The Westminster Confession is subject to the censure of the original Confession, being adopted under this proviso, that it was found by the Assembly of 1647 to be "most agreeable to the word of God, and in nothing contrary to the received doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of this kirk." The truth is, that the Church of Scotland was working with head and hand to proselytise or to beat England into the Presbyterian form of church government, and therefore adopted these books of the English Presbyterians, thinking there could be no unity without uniformity; a cruel mistake which was woefully retaliated upon them in the reigns of the second Charles and the second James. It is not with any particular expressions or doctrines of the Westminster Confession that I find fault, but with the general structure of it. It is really an imposition upon a man's conscience to ask him to subscribe such a minute document: it is also a call upon his previous knowledge of ecclesiastical controversy, which very few can honestly answer; and, being digested on a systematic principle, it is rather an exact code of doctrine, than the declaration of a person's faith in a personal God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. I find it to be a great snare to tender consciences, a great trial to honest men;—insomuch that as a pastor I have often been greatly perplexed to reconcile men, both elders and preachers, to the subscription of it. They seem to feel that it is rather an instrument for catching dishonest, than a rule for guiding honest, people; that it presupposeth men knavish, and prepareth gyves upon their legs, and shackles for their hands. I have a great objection to it, moreover, for mixing up the form of church government and ecclesiastical discipline, with the matter of a man's confession

of faith, seeing these are surely not necessary to salvation In one word, there is a great deal too much of it for rightly serving the ends of a confession; I greatly prefer the old Confession, and the Apostles' Creed to both. There is no use in hard-fasting men at such a rate; although it be very necessary to exhibit a distinct standard of faith for them to rally under.

While I say these things of this book as of a human composition, I do solemnly protest against those who maintain that it declares the doctrine, that Christ died only for the elect, and redeemed them, and them only, from the curse and bondage and misery of the Fall; which were to contradict the truth, that He redeemed everything which was created upon the earth, and every being who inherits the nature of Adam. This truth is not sufficiently declared, because it was not much called in question: about that time, indeed, it began to be called in question; and the contrary doctrine, according to Archbishop Ussher, in his judgment upon the subject, was introduced into England by Ames: and, I suppose, because there were some in the Assembly who were given to that error the subject was avoided. But surely it *was avoided*, and neither decreed for nor decreed against; and, being so, it remains in the state in which they found it, as expressed in our Standards and in the Articles of the Church of England. If I believed that the doctrine of particular redemption were embodied in the Westminster Confession, I would speak of it in very different language than I have used above; I would denounce it as an ungodly book, and move the Church to have it condemned of heresy, instead of exalting it as a standard of orthodoxy.

The two passages which they quote in support of their pernicious error are these: "As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so hath He, by the eternal and most free purpose of His will, forcordained all the means thereunto. Wherefore they who are elected, being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ,—are effectually called unto faith in Christ, by His Spirit working in due season,—are justified, adopted, sanctified, and kept by His power through faith unto salvation. Neither are any other redeemed by Christ, effectually called,

justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved, but the elect only." The last sentence is what they strain at, saying that it declareth redemption by Christ to be only for the elect. If the particle had been disjunctive instead of conjunctive, *or* instead of *and*, I would have allowed the conclusion; but being as it is, I deny it utterly. The thing asserted is, that only the elect have that done for them which is described by the combined and united force of these words, "redeemed, called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved." This is the true interpretation of the document. And that it is the one intended is manifest by this, that the whole section is affirmative of the elect; inclusive of them, and when it hath included them within the proper definition, it negatives all others from that chosen dignity. And of the rest of mankind, it asserteth that they are not so included in the decree of election, but passed by and ordained to dishonour and wrath, without mentioning whether God hath done anything for them or not. And why this silence? Because the subject treated of is "God's eternal decree," and not the work of Christ the Mediator.—The second passage occurs under this latter head, and is as follows: "To all those for whom Christ hath purchased redemption, He doth certainly and effectually apply and communicate the same, making intercession for them, and revealing unto them in and by the word the mysteries of salvation; effectually persuading them by His Spirit to believe and obey; and governing their hearts by His word and Spirit; overcoming all their enemies by His almighty power and wisdom, in such manner and ways as are most consonant to His wonderful and unsearchable dispensation." If the word *redemption* here used mean purchased from under the curse and bondage of sin, then this passage would be conclusive against the truth; which in the Catechism of the Church of England is expressed thus, "redeemed me and all mankind;" but because that word hath no meaning in itself save as is defined by the words with which it is connected, and by which the condition of the bondage is expressed, we must always ascertain this before we can judge of its import. In Rev. vi. 9, it is used of the Church, and them only, who are purchased for priests and kings unto God; in 2 Pet. ii. 1, it is used of the

reprobate who deny the Lord that bought them, being before ordained unto condemnation. If now we go into the context to ascertain what is the exact thing signified by the word *redemption*, we find it to be, "purchased not only reconciliation, but an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven, for all those whom the Father hath given unto Him;" that is the same sense in which it is used in Rev. vi. 9, and in which we have already seen it used in the third chapter of the Confession above referred to. Now, to the redeemed in this sense, we are all agreed that Christ doth certainly and effectually apply the same, &c.

While, therefore, we do exceedingly blame the Westminster divines for being silent on the great head of orthodox doctrine, the redemption of all mankind, and of all the material creation, out of the hands of Satan and his wicked angels, which is the very basis of all orthodox truth, the ground whereon God and the sinner meet, we will not allow these divines to be stigmatised by their indiscreet admirers, as if they had gainsaid the most precious of all the truths of Holy Scripture, denied the love of God to all men and every man, denied the work of Christ for all men and every man. No; the Westminster divines have enough to bear already for bringing in such a dogmatical confession of faith, and for seeking agreement at the expense of being silent on a great fundamental truth of the gospel: let them not be accused of overturning the foundation.

Along with the Confession, the Westminster divines drew up two Catechisms, the Larger, and the Shorter, intended to embody the faith and duty of a Christian. Of these, I have reprinted the former with the references to Scripture, as containing a full and sufficient code of Christian doctrine and morality. Taken as a whole, I approve of it very highly, especially the latter part concerning duty, which is about three fourths of the whole. As a compendium of Christian morals I know of nothing better, and do most earnestly commend it to my flock, and indeed to the whole Church. With respect to the doctrine, I think it sufficient in all that concerneth the offices and work of Christ for the elect people of God, and very deficient in all that respects God's goodness and grace

to the rest of mankind and to the whole world. In all which concerneth the application of the gospel unto the sinner by the Holy Ghost, through faith, with the benefits thereby conveyed and enjoyed, it is also good; but in shewing forth the dealing of God with men in their unconverted state, and their wickedness in resisting Him, it cometh far short. If it be understood as a Church Catechism, for making the members of Christ acquainted with their privileges and obligations, it is one of the most perfect which was ever penned; but if it be considered as a complete exhibition of the character of God and His actings towards His creatures, it cometh far short indeed. I have always contemplated it in the former sense, and in that sense I do now give it forth to the Church. It is not faultless even as a Church Catechism, but its faults are few compared with its excellences. One constant and common fault of this and all the Reformation Standards that I have seen, is to palliate and even to provide for the shortcomings, imperfections, and positive transgressions of the regenerate; which is clean contrary to Scripture, where the regenerate state is presented as a state of holiness, and all men are urged with diligence to attain unto sinless perfection. I agree as to the fact of the remainders of sin in the saints; but I disagree as to the necessity of their being there, and I charge them upon myself and upon all saints as a direct and wilful sin against the Spirit of Christ, which is given to us for complete and not for partial holiness. The time is come to meet this deficiency of the Reformation doctrine, directly and fully in the face, for by this door hath come in the most abominable heresy, that Christ had not the law of the flesh to deal with and to destroy. For they say, if this were so, then He must have been sinful; for to have flesh with the law of flesh in it, is to be a sinner. We deny this, and assert that all Scripture regardeth the regenerate man as holy, as having ceased from sin, the law of the flesh notwithstanding. And this it truly is, not by an artifice of language or a fiction of theology, but of very truth; because of regeneration it is the native force and property to take the flesh out of its bondage to sin, and give it liberty and power to all holiness. But having argued this matter when treating of Craig's Cate-

chism, I refrain from saying anything more upon it in this place.

While I have lamented, and will ever lament, over the deficiency of these Westminster Standards, and the shortcoming of all the Reformation divinity upon the subject of God's goodness and grace to every creature which doth on earth abide, I am far from signifying that they are without notices and distinct declarations thereof; but I mean that this, the character of our good Father, doth not appear everywhere shining out on sinners through these writings, which are often not a transparency, but a veil cast over the face of God; the veil indeed beautifully embroidered, but still a veil. Therefore the writings of men, and even the best Standards of the most orthodox Church, are to be put in an infinitely inferior place to the Holy Scriptures, in every word of which God lives, and breathes, and feels, and acts.

END OF VOL. I.

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